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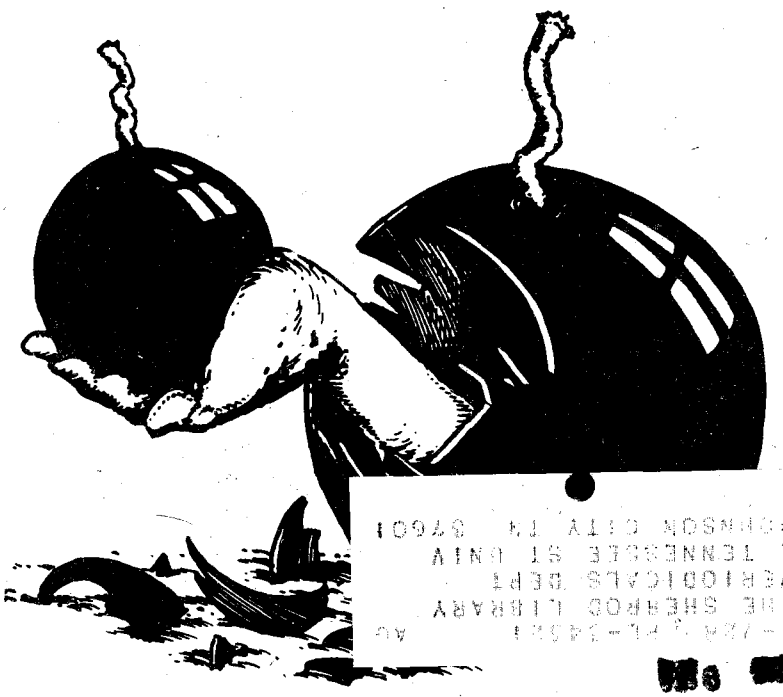

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WHAM!

WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS

The Theory and Fallacies of Counterinsurgency

or

Why We Were Sure To Lose in Vietnam

EQBAL AHMAD

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LETTERS

Life in the dark

Boston, Mass.

DEAR SIRS: I write in correction of *The Nation*'s June 7th editorial concerning the letters between Father Philip Berrigan and Sister Elizabeth McAlister which were attached to the superseding indictments recently handed down in the Harrisburg conspiracy case. Your editorial made several references to an article about the same letters published in the May 21st issue of *Life* that were just plain wrong. I do not in any way speak for *Life*, but as author of the article referred to I wish to set things straight.

The Nation said: "The defense now knows that copies of these letters had been leaked to correspondents of *Life* and *Time* . . . quite some time before the indictment was filed. *Time* hesitated to publish them and so did *Life*—that is, until they had been made part of the court record. . . . Having decided to publish the letters, *Life* ran a full-page ad in *The New York Times* featuring a reproduction of one of them."

In the first place, the government did "leak" those letters to correspondents of *Time*, *The New York Times* and *Newsweek*, to the columnists Evans and Novak, and God knows who else, but never, to the best of my knowledge, to a *Life* correspondent. More interesting—and reprehensible—in at least one of the cases cited above the government also tried to leak other alleged letters between the two defendants that were of a strictly personal and private character. Since none of these other letters had any bearing on the conspiracy charges or has been cited as evidentiary material in the body of the new indictment, the government's effort to get them published was an obvious attempt to smear the defendants in the public eye. . . .

Second, *The Nation* unaccountably asserts that *Life* finally did publish the two letters released by the government with the new indictment. Unaccountably, because all that *Life* ran was a photostat of eleven lines from *one* of the manuscript letters. It was this photostat which was reproduced in *The New York Times* ad referred to in *The Nation*'s editorial. In addition, I quoted another approximately five lines from the same letter in my article. . . .

However, on May 1, the day after the new indictment was handed down, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, and probably every other major newspaper in the country ran much lengthier excerpts from *both* letters, in some cases as much as 150 lines. The major TV networks, on their national news programs, also showed and read large portions of the letters the night before. Given all this publication on May 1, it seems gratuitously quarrelsome and indeed irresponsible of *The Nation* to single out *Life* as the "bad guy" for having printed a mere sixteen lines of the same stuff, three weeks later!

Ever since J. Edgar Hoover's abusive attack on the Berrigans in Congress last November, culminating in the unprecedented release of "evidentiary" letters in April, the Justice Department has resorted to extralegal means to convince an increasingly dubious public that Hoover's cry of conspiracy was true, and to win in the press a case it seems unlikely to prove in court. This process, which *The Nation* quite correctly terms "trial by headline" of the most flagrant kind, was exactly the point of my *Life* article. . . .

Lee Lockwood

Lee Lockwood's piece in *Life* was a good piece and a fair piece. But the thrust of our editorial was against the practice of "leaks" from the government used to influence public opinion against defendants it is prosecuting. Mr. Lockwood confirms and amplifies what we had to say about the prevalence of this practice. If in this instance *Life* did not know what *Time* knew, it should protest the discrimination. We assumed on the basis of the full-page ad and the prevalence of the practice that *Life* had also received copies of the letters.

Editors

EDITORIALS

Peking Spectacular

Any move that holds promise of bringing about an early normalization of relations between this country and China is of course to be commended and, in this sense, the President's gaudy initiative in sending Dr. Kissinger to Peking is welcome news. But there are aspects of this latest Nixon improvisation that compel us to greet it with less euphoria than it has provoked in the general press. The press is usually enthusiastic about any move that is in itself a good news story, particularly one that holds promise of unfolding into a still better story. Imagine covering Nixon in Peking! But so little is known to date about the Kissinger-Chou talks that comment must be confined to surface aspects of the story.

In the first place, it has been apparent for some time that the President needed a headline-grabbing spectacular that would make it possible for him to extricate himself—if only temporarily—from the box into which recent North Vietnamese proposals and publication of the Pentagon Papers had driven him. The visit-to-Peking ploy has at least given him time for additional maneuver if it has done nothing else. For the moment at least he is off the hook and has recaptured the propaganda initiative. It has also been clear for some weeks that he was seeking an approach to the Chinese that would not embarrass him if it were to be rebuffed. In a recent editorial (June 21, p. 771), we suggested, in commenting on Nicolae Ceausescu's visit to Peking—which extended from June 1-9—that "the suspicion arises that Ceausescu is acting as a go-between. . . . If the Indochina war is ever to end, and it would be to Nixon's advantage to end it before the 1972 elections, China must have a prominent role in ending it. A settlement not approved by China would be no settlement at all." This much has been clear since the Paris peace talks began, if not before. There should never have been much doubt in Washington that Peking would be interested in participating in a new Geneva conference on Indochina. Chou En-lai indicated such a willingness in his talks with Gough Whitlam, the leader of the opposition Labour Party in Australia. The wonder is that this route was not explored as early, say, as 1968. Profound misapprehensions as to China's intentions ruled it out until now, when Nixon's desperation made it expedient.

But we may be sure, as an unnamed diplomat was quoted as saying in *The New York Times*, that Chou En-lai does not like Richard Nixon enough to help make him President for four more years just out of good-fellowship. Mr. Whitlam indicated some considerations which Chou En-lai mentioned to him that have not been widely reported in the press here. China is concerned—as it has been for years—with the system of alliances with which we have sought to encircle it. It is concerned about its borders, as every nation is, and the invasion of Cambodia only heightened this concern. It is concerned, too, about Thailand and Taiwan and about Japan, which may have nuclear weapons before too long, and the Soviet Union, which already has them in abundance.

Very large issues must, therefore, be considered before a general settlement can be reached in the Pacific and the

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settlement of these issues will take time. Mr. Nixon is fully aware of all this, but it may be that he feels that a quick visit to Peking, which could result in limited diplomatic recognition and the setting up of a new Geneva conference, would suffice for his immediate political purposes. And it should be noted that the Chinese have benefited from the headlines as much as he has. They would seem now to be assured of a seat in the U.N. which should probably be theirs before the President's visit. A measure of trade on favorable terms would seem to be possible; American industry would no doubt like to provide industrial equipment to China as it did in the early phase of our relations with the Soviet Union. Even if the Vietnamese War drags on, a new Geneva conference in which China would necessarily play a prominent role would please Peking and, from our point of view, it offers the best prospect for a durable settlement in Southeast Asia.

For these and other considerations the Chinese are no doubt willing to give Mr. Nixon his headlines so that he can campaign as the "peace candidate" in 1972. And they may well have calculated that only a President elected with the support of conservative and right-wing elements could afford to go even this far in reaching an understanding with them. Under President Nixon the far Right can fume and curse but, in one of the stock phrases of practical politics, "where else can they go?" To Wallace, perhaps, but that is unlikely without further provocation. It is ironic that Mr. Nixon, one of the earliest and most consistent China haters, should have taken this first highly publicized step on the road to Peking even if it turns out to be a longer road than he imagines. In the meantime, Senators Buckley, Goldwater, Tower and the others must have bitter thoughts indeed, but it only serves them right for having believed in Nixon in the first place.

Protestant Ethic, Chinese Style

Now that the People's Republic of China is more or less open to American reporters, the media are full of stories about Chinese culture under Mao Tse-tung—culture in the sense of how people live and work together. Some of these stories are sophisticated and instructive; some are amusing in the open-mouthed wonder of the reporters at China's success, on balance, in creating a cooperative commonwealth.

It is impossible to sum up in a few words the differences between the American and Chinese cultures, but everyone seems to agree that China is practically free of crime, that people work for the state more than for themselves, that production is increasing despite the country's relative poverty in modern machinery and the resources needed to maintain some 750 million people. And, despite considerable residual dissension, every visitor notes the predominating evangelical attitude.

Yet there is really nothing very surprising about all this. Thorstein Veblen noted long ago the advantages of technological "borrowing"—how a transplanted invention, stripped of accretions that detract from its usefulness, can be made to work better when put to work in a different environment. The Chinese have borrowed from us what is called, not altogether accurately, the Protestant

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ethic of hard work and an aimful life, and applied it to masses of people instead of to the individual. The leaders have said to the peasants and workers: if you want to improve your life, you must do it collectively. It is legal for a peasant to grow food on a small private plot for sale, but the predominant way of life is socialistic—and it works. As *Time* says, "Jobs are available, the yuan is firm, and the kind of famines that used to wipe out 20 million people at a time are a fading memory."

Actually, our old-style work ethic worked passably well (though with great hardship for many people) until we became what, with considerable exaggeration, has been called the "affluent society." Simultaneously, in terms of what it could be if social advance paralleled technological advance, it became a socially bankrupt society. In its more extreme forms, it is a society based on the ethic of the Mafia chief, of Billy Sol Estes, Bobby Baker, and in some degree almost everyone—even those who disapprove of its rapacity and materialism. That something was basically wrong was a widespread feeling; it was equally evident that words could not cure it. When John F. Kennedy exhorted us not to ask what the country could do for us but what we could do for the country, it sounded ironic.

If the Chinese have purloined our ethic, in theory there is no reason why we cannot learn from what they have done with it. Let the people themselves do what must be done, not as selfish individualists but as a *society* striving to improve itself. But although the people must supply the underlying motive power, such a transformation is impossible without leaders who believe in it and are capable of inspiring the millions of ordinary citizens. An approach to the ideal modern state would be one incorporating American technology and Chinese social zeal, but such an amalgamation, if it is possible at all, is certainly not just around the corner.

Why Not?

Sen. John Sherman Cooper, long known and admired for his good common sense, has offered a good common-sense proposal to the Congress, namely, that the National Security Act of 1947 be amended to require the Central Intelligence Agency to keep the "germane" committees of the Congress "fully and currently" informed by means of "analyses in regular and special reports" incorporating the intelligence gathered by that agency.

The argument for the proposal is clear enough: Congress is entitled to the same information that the executive receives in order to pass considered judgments on matters pertaining to its responsibilities. And why not? Surprisingly, the existing legislation does not specifically bar dissemination of CIA-gathered intelligence to Congress, but neither does it require that Congress be informed. So, by a familiar bureaucratic process, the practice developed of using this intelligence to brief the executive, leaving Congress out in the cold to scrounge around and get what intelligence it could. This is one of the principal causes of the exclusion of the Congress from deciding on when to start wars and when to end them. Of course it retains the power of the purse, but few members of either House are courageous enough to stop a war by withholding funds—it leaves them open to the accusation that they are letting down "our boys," which can prove fatal at election time.

Under the Cooper amendment, CIA information would have limited Congressional circulation. It would be made available to the Senate and House Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees, whose members could pass along pertinent portions to other legislators and staff members working on national security matters, subject to the normal security requirements.

Note, in contrast, how the CIA reports are used under the present arrangement. The President, for his purposes, leaks a CIA report to, say, *The New York Times* on, say, the POW proposals of the North Vietnamese Government. Does the President call in the reporters and tell them candidly that here is a CIA report of general interest which I am divulging to all of you? He does nothing of the kind—he would rather play the leaking game. That is one reason why the executive prefers to hoard the information and withhold it from the Congress: he wants to be able to leak it when it serves his purpose to do so.

The damaging effects of this system are obvious. The Congress and the public are denied information on which vital decisions are based. The denial applies not only to military information but substantially to all data except what the executive chooses to share, which is always what will benefit him politically by enhancing his image and making him look, if not infallible, at least pretty close to it. The effect is to multiply errors as well as to hide them. The executive lacks the benefit of valuable feedback from the public and the press.

Senator Cooper has taken an important first step to limit the secrecy factor which bedevils our foreign relations. His remedy would broaden support for foreign policy and save us from involvement in another Indochina mess.

For Peace and Freedom

Since its founding in 1915 the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has adhered to its goals. The only two American women to receive the Nobel Peace awards were WILPF leaders—co-founder Jane Addams and Emily Green Balch.

At the recent convention of the U.S. organization, held at Marylhurst College, a Catholic school near Portland, Ore., Mildred Scott Olmsted of Philadelphia, a member for fifty years, told *The Nation*: "Basically, we are the same as when we started. We began as an international organization. Miss Addams said that was one of the unique features. Another was that we put peace and freedom together. We have been constant on our basic principles. We keep applying them as the world changes. The applications change but the goals remain the same.

"WILPF is too broad and complex to be a mass movement," Mrs. Olmsted continued. "It was never intended to be one. Mass movements can't move fast enough; we want to influence people. We're a pioneer organization and that's what we've always intended to be."

As in the past, WILPF continues to be, essentially, a white, middle-class, middle-aged grouping of concerned women. Only about 5 per cent of the 200 delegates were black; only about 10 per cent were under 30. But the younger women are such an electrifying force that one of the commissions recommended that "we explore new life

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styles for WILPF." And more black women are expected to join as WILPF moves more boldly against racism. The commission on that subject declared: "Only recently has a large membership of the organization realized the inconsistency of peace and freedom in a racist society. Only recently has the organization realized the extent of racism practiced in war. . . . Recognizing that racism is rooted and festering in institutions of education, religion and the political arena, the organization is awakening to the one great deterrent to peace and freedom in the United States —racism."

WILPF maintained its forward position at the Marylhurst convention: It committed itself to working for an early withdrawal of U.S. troops from Indochina, defeat of the Nixon Family Assistance Plan, cancellation of the Amchitka and Wyoming nuclear explosions, a halt to research and development of chemical-biological weapons and destruction of existing stockpiles, amnesty for draft resisters and deserters, freedom for Angela Davis and other political prisoners, bail reform, support of students rights movements, active participation "in the struggle for Women's Liberation," alleviating the "crisis in public school education," and resolving economic problems.

Many all-male, or mixed-sex, conventions could have learned much from the democratic, intelligent discussions at Marylhurst. Remarks were short and to the point, there were no factions or cliques, there was no attempt at a power play, and they were as good-humored and tolerant (except for a few younger ones, who will learn from the veterans) as they were deadly serious.

The Nation's correspondent left Marylhurst College not only with a sense of exhilaration but with a feeling that long after many "Now" groups have departed from the scene, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom will be in the forefront of the socially conscious trailblazers.

A Job for Mr. Mitchell

When it comes to fulminating against "crime," Attorney General Mitchell has no peer. He is also unrivaled as a speechmaker on that topic and many others, including, naturally, law enforcement. In the latter field we have a job for him that needs doing, and one could infer that it is Mr. Mitchell's duty to undertake it. Let him proceed immediately to activate the decree entered in 1965, following lengthy litigation charging the General Motors Corporation with, in effect, monopolizing the manufacture of busses.

The enforcement of that order would be conducive to the public welfare, which seems to interest Mr. Mitchell less than crimes of violence, disorderly demonstrations against the Indochinese war, and what he regards as undue leniency against defendants in criminal cases. The case against General Motors is not in the criminal category, but failure to enforce the law against that great corporation may be as harmful, cumulatively, as the more dramatic offenses of individuals.

The damage that is being done is set forth in a speech by Theodore W. Kheel inserted in the *Congressional Record* by Rep. Abner J. Mikva (D., Ill.).

The situation is that now, when the need for public transportation is critical, far fewer busses are available than in past years. In 1966, the year after the decree against General Motors was entered, 3,100 motor busses were delivered to transit operators in the United States. The number has dropped steadily every year since, and preliminary figures for 1970 indicate that it is down to 1,442—less than half the 1966 total. Why this decline, at a time when the federal government is spending tens of billions on modern highways?

Mr. Kheel points out that the bus and the private automobile are in "deadly competition" on the highways, and the automobile is winning, to the detriment of all concerned, including the automobile owners. The bus-automobile competition is of course only one aspect of the contest between public and private transportation which results in steady deterioration of service coupled with steady increases in cost, which in turn drives more travelers to use their cars, and so on in the familiar vicious circle. The highways are so jammed that in large cities the major broadcasters supply traffic information from the air, giving the commuting motorist a choice of evils—when there is a choice.

Other evils multiply in proportion: 30 per cent of Negroes in the Los Angeles black districts have no car; and a car there is vital in terms of jobs and getting to work. This is a nationwide situation. In wealthy Westchester County, adjoining New York City on the north, the bus service between towns is a chronic scandal. In the city itself it is nothing to boast about. Since World War II patronage of busses and subways has dropped from 2.6 billion to 1.7 billion—a loss of almost a billion. In the same period, automobile crossings of the Hudson River rose from 40 million a year to 140 million. Other cities show similar ratios.

This deterioration was already well advanced in 1956, and in that year the government brought suit against General Motors, charging it with monopolizing the manufacture and sale of busses in violation of the Sherman Act. In 1955 General Motors sold 2,724 buses, or 84.3 per cent of the total. Its principal competitors had, respectively, 6.7, 3.7, and 2.3 per cent of the market.

The litigation dragged on and in 1965 was settled by a consent decree, the usual device by which the government acknowledges inability to do very much about a harmful practice in which powerful corporate interests are involved. General Motors promised to stop some of its restrictive practices, but continued as the dominant producer of busses. However, this consent decree contained an Achilles heel for General Motors. It provided that if, any time before 1976, a competing bus manufacturer left the industry, the Justice Department could return to court and deprive General Motors of its monopoly. Not one, but two, of the competitors have disappeared, but the Justice Department has taken no action.

General Motors should get out of the bus business without qualification. It should be willing to do so; if not, it should be forced.

SUMMER SCHEDULE

During the summer, *The Nation* will *not* appear on the following dates: August 9, August 23.

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WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS

The Theory and Fallacies of Counterinsurgency

EQBAL AHMAD

From the beginning, the core of the tragedy in Southeast Asia has been the inability of Western political leaders, and particularly American political leaders, to grasp the nature of insurgency in areas formerly under colonial rule, or the limitations of counterinsurgency to quell it. Accordingly, The Nation *is devoting almost this entire issue to Eqbal Ahmad's essay on the subject. In somewhat different form it will be a chapter in his forthcoming* Reaction and Revolution in the Third World *(Pantheon). Mr. Ahmad is a Fellow of the Adlai Stevenson Institute in Chicago.*

To write on counterinsurgency one must first explain what the so-called "insurgencies" really are. In the United States that may be difficult because for the most part the social scientists who write on revolutionary warfare have been proponents of counterinsurgency. As a result, the biases of incumbents are built into the structure, images and language of contemporary Western, especially American, literature on the subject. We have come to accept ideologically contrived concepts and words as objective descriptions.

One could take innumerable examples—terrorism, subversion, pacification, urbanization, protective reaction, defensive interdiction, etc.—and expose the realities behind these words and phrases. The term counterinsurgency is itself an excellent example. Like all coinages in this area, it is value-laden and misleading. In fact, counterinsurgency is not at all directed against insurgency, which Webster defines as "a revolt against a government, not reaching the proportions of an organized revolution; and not recognized as belligerency." The truth is, the Congress and the country would be in uproar if the government were to claim that U.S. counterinsurgency capabilities could conceivably be available to its clients for putting down "revolts not reaching the proportions of an organized revolution." The truth is the opposite: counterinsurgency is a multifaceted assault against organized revolutions. The euphemism is not used by accident, nor from ignorance. It serves to conceal the reality of a foreign policy dedicated to combating revolutions abroad; it helps to relegate revolutionaries to the status of outlaws. The reduction of a revolution to mere insurgency is also an implicit denial of its legitimacy. In this article, counterinsurgency and counterrevolution are used interchangeably.

Analytically, counterinsurgency may be discussed in terms of two primary models—the conventional-establishment and the liberal-reformist; and two ancillary models—the punitive-militarist and the technological-attritive. I term these latter ancillary because they develop after the fact—from actual involvement in counterrevolution, and from interplay between the conventional and liberal institutions and individuals so involved. The models, though identifiable in terms of the intensity and scope of their application at given times, and in terms of the agencies and individuals favoring them, are operationally integrated in the field. I outline them here:

Although monolithic in its goal of suppressing revolutions, the theory and practice of counterinsurgency reflects the pluralism of the Western societies to which most of its practitioners and all of its theoreticians belong. A pluralistic, bargaining political culture induces an institutionalized compulsion to compromise. Within a defined boundary, there can be something for everyone. Hence, the actual strategy and tactics of counterinsurgency reflect compromise, no one blueprint being applied in its original, unadulterated form. This give-and-take contributes to a most fateful phenomenon of counterrevolutionary involvement: groups and individuals continue to feel that their particular prescriptions were never administered in full dosage and at the right intervals. They show a tendency toward self-justification, a craving to continue with and improve their formulas for success. Severe critics of specific "blunders" and "miscalculations," they still persist in seeing "light at the end of the tunnel." I shall return to this in discussing the Doctrine of Permanent Counterinsurgency.

Set Battles; 'Liberal' Doctrine

We might view the conventional-establishment approach as constituting the common denominator of the assumptions and objectives shared by all incumbents; viz., an *a priori* hostility toward revolution, the view that its origins are conspiratorial, a managerial attitude toward it as a problem, and a technocratic-military approach to its solution. In strategy and tactics, this approach prefers conventional ground and air operations, requiring large deployments of troops, search-and-destroy missions (also called "mop-up operations"), the tactics of "encirclement" and "attrition"—which involve, on the one hand, large military fortifications (bases, enclaves) connected by "mobile" battalions (in Vietnam, helicopter-borne troops and air cavalry); and, on the other hand, massive displacement of civilian population and the creation of free-fire zones. The conventionalists also evince deep longings for set battles, and would multiply the occasions by forcing, surprising or luring the guerrillas into conventional showdowns. The results of these pressures are bombings (e.g., North Vietnam) or invasion of enemy "sanctuaries" across the frontiers of conflict (e.g., Cambodia) and the tactic of offering an occasional bait in the hope of luring the enemy to a concentrated attack (e.g., Dienbienphu, Khe Sanh).

If the conventional-establishment attitudes constitute the lowest common denominator of counterrevolution, the liberal-reformists are the chief exponents of its doctrine, and the most sophisticated programmers of its practice. They provide the core of the policies specifically associated

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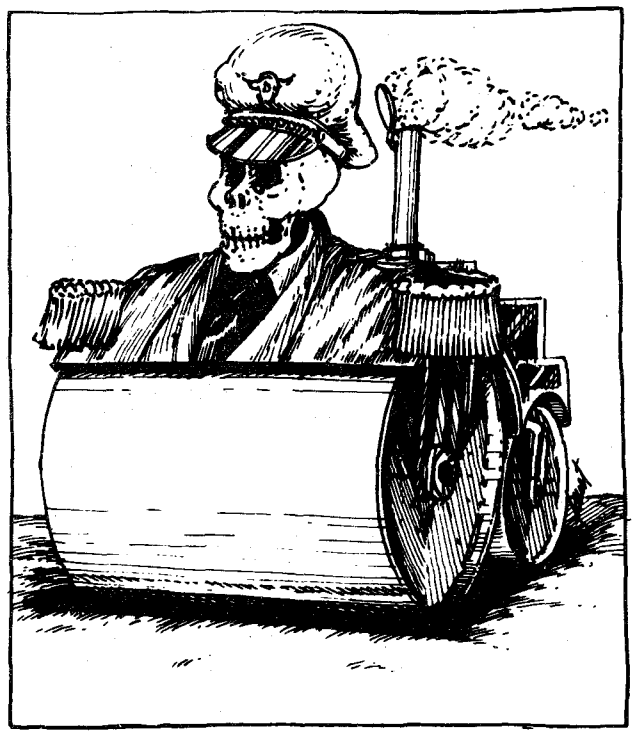
with counterinsurgency: the creation of counter-guerrilla guerrillas (Special Forces); the stress on irregular tactics, on the one-ness of civilian and military roles; the insistence on maximum use of mercenaries, psychological warfare, counter-terror, and above all pacification. The term "liberal-reformist" reflects the expressed goals as well as the political background of individuals involved in defining and practicing this form of counterrevolution. Its rhetoric is reformist and liberal: "freedom," "progress," "development," "democracy," "reforms," "participation" and "self-determination" are its favorite working words. For the most part, its theorists, of whom a majority come from



France and the United States, have been men of impeccable liberal credentials.

In France, the liberal-reformists included such eminent liberal politicians as Jacques Soustelle and Robert Lacoste. In the army its exponents were reputedly the most progressive commanders, those who had fought in the Resistance against Nazi occupation or with the Free French Army. Humiliated by defeat in Indochina, they determined to practice *pacification* in Algeria. There, again frustrated by failures, these soldier-reformers increasingly meddled in politics. They helped destroy the Fourth Republic, rebelled against the Fifth, became accomplices of the European Ultras whom they had once openly detested and from whom they had been promising to deliver the Algerians, founded the fascistic OAS and ended by mercilessly massacring the natives whose freedom they had been claiming to protect.

In the United States, many of Kennedy's New Frontier men, and well-known university professors of liberal reputation at prestigious campuses, are prominent liberal-reformists. Research and development on counterinsurgency expanded dramatically during the Kennedy administration. As a sign of his special interest, Mr. Kennedy ordered that the Special Forces wear green berets, a symbol of elitism that had been resisted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Hanson Baldwin, military analyst for *The New York Times,* complained that counterinsurgency "has become a fetish with the President, and of course all the military schools are reflecting this White House concern." Even the Chaplains' Corps developed a counterinsurgency program.

The punitive-militarist style is a product of the liberal-reformist doctrine of counterinsurgency; but it invariably acquires a life of its own. It entails irregular tactics, small-unit deployments, efficiently and relentlessly executed reprisals against civilians suspected of aiding guerrillas, the systematic use of torture, the murder of prisoners, and the institution of total control over the population. In theory, pacification demands that the friendly or neutral population be treated with kindness and consideration. In practice, it is impossible to distinguish between friendly and hostile villagers: the men are seldom around; the women are always sad and solicitous; the children, sullen or noisy. Strangers and afraid, soldiers in an alien environment strewn with booby traps can do no else than perceive the civilians as hostile and meet their ordered or understood quota of body counts. They make few pretenses about winning hearts and minds, although in deference to the principles of pacification candies are sometimes distributed, music is played, and food and first aid are provided to survivors—especially after a hard strike.

In Algeria this form of warfare was known as *"style-para,"* in reference to the paratroopers of General Massu whose exploits included "winning" the hair-raising Battle of Algiers. In Vietnam it is practiced more generally; although it appears to be especially popular with the U.S. Special Forces and the mercenaries recruited by them, the Koreans and the ARVN ranger battalions. The main virtue of this style is that, unlike the massive "mop-ups" and impersonal bombings of conventional operations, it produces somewhat personalized massacres, like that of My Lai, which give the victims no less than the killers a sense at least of human contact; it also generates some public understanding of the war crimes which counterrevolutionary interventions often entail.

War by Proxy

An increasing reliance on technological-attritive methods signals the shift of counterrevolutionary foreign intervention in a genocidal direction. When a war to crush a revolution has been definitively lost—i.e., when the moral isolation and illegitimacy of the client regime become total and irreversible; when even a prolonged and massive foreign intervention fails to break the "enemy's" will to resist, while producing widespread anti-war sentiment at home; when draftees become restive and resistant; when the protracted war is seen to be bad for business and begins to contribute to the compounded distress of inflation and recession, then a great power caught in counterrevolutionary operations has but two choices: it can negotiate withdrawal, as de Gaulle did in Algeria, or it can continue the war, and subsequently a quasi-permanent occupation of the belligerent country, at a price acceptable to the people at home, but costly to the "insurgents" abroad. It is the latter choice that President Nixon has made with his policy of Vietnamization. A "semantic hoax," as Sen. Harold E. Hughes described it, Vietnamization is a euphe-

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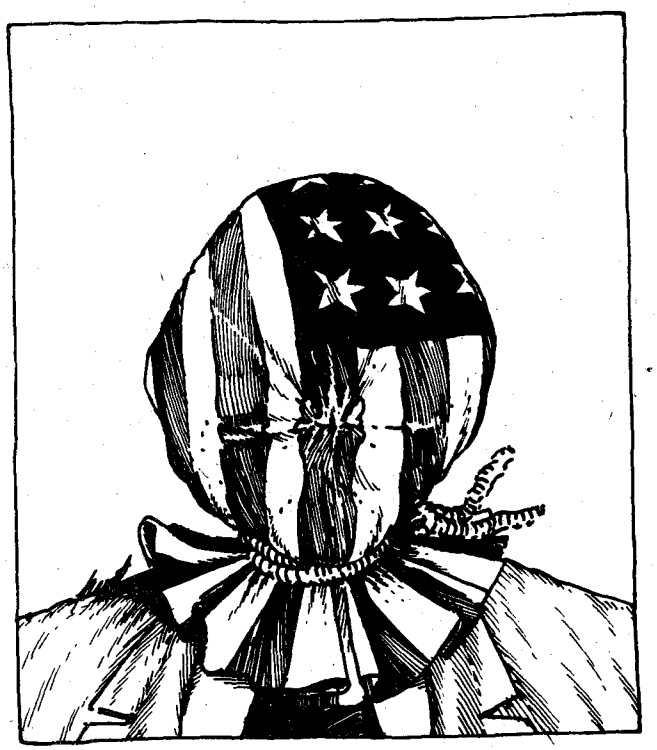
mism for further mechanization of the war. It is also, as Senator McGovern has stated, a manipulation to "tranquilize the conscience of America while our government wages war by proxy. . . ."

Sir Robert Thompson, a trusted adviser of Mr. Nixon and renowned expert on counterinsurgency, whose optimistic evaluation of Vietnamization was cited in the President's policy statement as proof of its success, describes it as a "long haul, low cost" strategy. It is worth noting a few of the considerations that went into its making. First, Sir Robert warns in *No Exit from Vietnam* of the impact made in a democratic society "by the coffins coming home, and by higher taxes." Second, he estimates that it "will certainly take ten to fifteen years" to achieve the desired goal—a politically stable, non-Communist, independent state of South Vietnam. Hence, he advises that, in order to maintain public acceptance of a protracted involvement, one must show some progress: "As soon as progress is visible, even though success may still be many years away, time ceases to be such an important factor. There will be few indeed who are not then prepared to take the extra time required for victory." Third, Sir Robert thinks that "there is nothing new about the horror and tragedy of the Vietnam war except that it has been exposed to the camera and brought into the sitting room." He notes that "running insurgency sores in some Latin American countries . . . have made very little impact outside the area of conflict."

Making the war domestically acceptable, then, means turning it into a "forgotten war" (Laos is a model), demoting it to the back pages of newspapers, keeping it at a maximum distance from TV cameras. It means stimulating illusions of progress, whatever the reality. Above all, it demands lowering the monetary costs and the American casualties. The former requires a reduction of the expensive American manpower; the latter dictates avoidance of active fighting by U.S. ground forces. Both measures help maintain the illusion of progress and keep the public quiet.



At the same time, if victory is ever to be grasped, the war must remain very expensive for the enemy. His strength must be sapped, his political "infrastructure" destroyed, his morale undermined, his resources and base depleted. It should be underscored that the latter is identified by Sir Robert as being "not outside the country" nor "jungles and swamps" but the "populated areas" "under insurgent control" and even those "areas still ostensibly under government control." He recommends a return to the techniques of counterinsurgency which he successfully practiced in Malaya and which he has been prescribing as an adviser on Vietnam for more than a decade—in the conviction, of course, that they have never been fully implemented. These include: inducing the Saigon regime to act lawfully, but without preventing it from passing emergency laws; improving civil and military administration; defining the obligations of the central government and the villages; selecting priority areas for pacification; mounting fix-and-destroy operations in the areas outside the selected "ring." Finally: "Offensive operations into contested and enemy held areas will still be necessary, for which reason the securely held areas should be limited to allow for an adequate reserve of forces for such operations."

Obviously, if the goal of defeating the NLF while minimizing American costs and casualties is to be attained, the Saigon government must progressively take over the task of governing and fighting. If the Saigon regime does not or cannot do so, then the United States, unwilling to negotiate withdrawal, has only one choice: maximum replacement of men with machines, for "cost-effective" offensive operations in the areas Sir Robert defines as enemy base. Later on in this article, I shall return to the irrelevance of Sir Robert's and others' administrative prescriptions for a country that has been fighting a long and bitter war of national liberation, and where no amount of managerial manipulation by a foreign power can equip its native "elite" with even a semblance of legitimacy. Especially it cannot do so when that elite carries the stigma of treachery, having actively collaborated with colonial France and now sanctioning the systematic destruction, by the succeeding foreign power, of the people and country it claims to govern. Hence, notwithstanding the counterinsurgents' recommendations, and their deep faith in the power of borrowed, bureaucratic, "cost-effective" "innovations," the Saigon government could not take over the war even in "ten to fifteen years," as Sir Robert surmised in his most optimistic year of the war in Vietnam. A brief look at the facts compels a very somber estimate of the prospects for Vietnamization.

A Nation of Refugees

As a consequence of the massive American military presence and the bomb-induced "urbanization" (in Laos the "strategic movement of people"), the Saigon regime is now in a worse predicament than ever, although a "residual" American force might keep the government in power indefinitely. A third of South Vietnam's people are estimated to be refugees (so are 25 per cent of Laotians, and more than a million Cambodians), almost entirely because of the "air support" provided by the United

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States. The Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Refugees, headed by Sen. Edward Kennedy [see "Indochina: A Slaughter of Innocents" by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, *The Nation*, June 28], has shown how the pacification agencies and the Saigon government collaborate to "solve" the refugee problem by "reclassifying the refugees out of existence."

I mention the refugees rather than the dead because this "urbanized" mass, though classified out of existence, is still a reality; it makes the cities as hopeless for the incumbent regime as are the rural areas. Students, workers and Buddhists have recently risked severe repression to raise their voices in opposition. Informed sources in Paris tell me that Saigon's shrewdest politicians are quietly currying favor with the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG); some courageous conservatives like Deputy Ngo Con Duc openly favor a provisional, coalition government of reconciliation.

In 1970 inflation rose by 50 per cent in Vietnam. According to *The New York Times* (July 27, 1970) ARVN's rate of desertion was "up nearly 50 per cent during the summer months of 1970," despite what officials termed the "morale building effects of recent operations in Cambodia." In Cambodia itself two paratrooper battalions of the expeditionary force "were operating with only 65 per cent of their manpower—the rest having deserted." General Do Cao Tri, Commander of the III Corps area which includes Saigon, and leader of the Cambodian expedition, is reported to have been less conservative with his estimates. General Tri was killed last March commanding the ill-fated Laotian invasion. He told newsmen in Dalat that 75 per cent of his soldiers desert; of those remaining less than half wish to fight, and for every ARVN soldier killed in battle, nine desert.

Meanwhile, *The New York Times* (October 19, 1970) disclosed a top-secret CIA report to the effect that, in response to Vietnamization, the NLF had infiltrated some 30,000 spies, reaching the highest levels of the Saigon government and including its secret services; that the "VC infrastructure" remained impenetrable, and that both conditions depended upon the complicity of the majority of the government's civilian and defense employees. The "disclosure" may have been meant to prepare the public for more repression and purges by the Thieu-Ky regime, but its significance is clear: its foreign trustees know that the regime, isolated from the people, is also hollow and eroding from within. Even Sir Robert is reported to have returned gloomy from his recent "mission to Macedonia," as he unblushingly calls Vietnam, fancying his relationship to Mr. Nixon as being the modern equivalent of the expert-advisers to Roman emperors.

Such being the realities of Vietnamization, a U.S. government intent on winning can only mechanize the war. GIs are being replaced by airplanes, electronic devices, helicopter-gunships, long-range artillery, a variety of anti-personnel weapons, massive defoliation, crop destruction and depopulation. The details of these daily crimes and the amount of damage they do is not and may never be completely known, especially since the U.S. Government remains the primary source of information. As *The New York Times* has commented editorially, "The headlines gradually faded, but the air-war did not." Nor did the chemical war, nor helicopter hunting, nor the gruesome anti-personnel weapons which maim indiscriminately and leave so many disabled to be cared for.

If the population is to the guerrillas what water is to fish, the ultimate weapon of a degenerate but powerful counterinsurgency is to drain the water. Mr. Johnson embarked on that course, and Mr. Nixon is continuing it more skillfully, and perhaps more consciously, than did his predecessor. The policy may not be genocidal in intent; its goal appears to be attrition. And depending on how technically the word genocide is defined, it may not be so in effect if it succeeds, as I believe it will not, in yielding to the United States the beaten and sunk remainder of a once proud and brave people—a sort of 20th-century Indian reservation in the heart of Asia.

In counterinsurgency, then, democratic "pluralism" is experienced by the targetted population in its corrupt, morally inverted form. In the field the different styles blend. The guerrillas and the masses suffer all four: they are swept and bombed conventional style; punished and tortured para-style; quartered and controlled pacification style; and finally, face the prospects of a "long-haul, low-cost" technological extermination. In the lexicon of counterrevolutionaries these wars are "limited" only in their consequences for the intervening power. For the people and country under assault, they are total.

The Blunders of Bias

The attitudes and assumptions shared by all believers in counterinsurgency may be summarized as follows:

Revolutionary warfare is seen as a threat. In *To Move a Nation*, Roger Hilsman recalls that, "from the beginning of his administration, the President [Kennedy] was convinced that the *techniques* of 'revolutionary warfare' constituted a special kind of threat. . . ." In an address to the National War College, Vice President Humphrey spoke of this "bold, new form of aggression which could rank with the discovery of gunpowder" as constituting "the major challenge to our security." If guerrilla warfare is viewed as the latest enemy weapon, Vietnam is its testing ground. "If guerrilla techniques succeed in Vietnam," wrote James Reston in *The New York Times*, "nobody in Washington dare assume that the same techniques will not be applied in all Communist rimlands from Korea to Iran." It is this view of revolutionary warfare as a menacing technique, a weapon lethal to the interests of the United States, that has led counterrevolutionary scholars like W. W. Rostow to portray the invasion of Vietnam as a war to end wars. He told a University of Leeds audience that:

> . . . if we have the common will to hold together and get on with the job—the struggle in Vietnam might be the last great confrontation of the postwar era. . . . If the Cuban missile crisis was the Gettysburg of the cold war, Vietnam could be the Wilderness for, indeed, the cold war has been a kind of global civil conflict. Vietnam could be made the closing of one chapter in modern history and the opening of another.

The negative bias prevents an understanding of the unprecedented popularity of armed revolutions in the Third World today, and the capacity of some to expand and

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sustain their struggle against incredibly heavy odds. Their purpose being counterrevolutionary, the theorists and practitioners of counterinsurgency cannot grasp or will not acknowledge the illegitimacy of incumbents, the finality of broken political and social links, and the forging of new ones. A recognition of the revolutionary process, its causes, creative thrust, inherent justice, and the legitimacy that can be attained by a revolutionary movement would cost the counterinsurgent his *raison d'être*. Understandably, he concentrates on studying and imitating the "techniques" and "tactics" of revolutionary warfare, while never comprehending the essence, the inner logic, of revolutions. I. F. Stone has accurately described a peculiarity of the literature on counterinsurgency in *In Time of Torment*:

> In reading the military literature on guerrilla warfare now so fashionable at the Pentagon, one feels that these writers are like men watching a dance from outside through heavy plate glass windows. They see the motions but they can't hear the music. They put the mechanical gestures down on paper with pedantic fidelity. But what rarely comes through to them are the injured racial feelings, the misery, the rankling slights, the hatred, the devotion, the inspiration and the desperation. So they do not really understand what leads men to abandon wife, children, home, career, friends; to take to the bush and live gun in hand like a hunted animal; to challenge overwhelming military odds rather than acquiesce any longer in humiliation, injustice or poverty. . . .

Simplification by Technique

There is a theory that views revolutionary warfare as being the product of a conspiracy which should be handled primarily as a technical problem; i.e., a problem of plotting and subversion on the one hand and of intelligence and suppression on the other. As the chief conspiratorial group, the "Communists" are alleged to be the most likely initiators and beneficiaries of such revolutions.

As was evident from the earlier quotations on the threat of guerrillas, "technique" is a key word in counterinsurgency. "We have a long way to go," Defense Secretary McNamara told a Congressional committee in 1963, "in devising and implementing effective counter-measures against the Communist techniques. But this is a challenge we must meet if we are to defeat the Communists in this kind of war. It is quite possible that in the decade of the 1960s the decisive struggle will take place in this area."

Given the preoccupation with technique, conduct of counterinsurgency is viewed as largely an exercise in the strategy and tactics of pacification and combat—that is, in managerial and military experimentations which come to be viewed as two facets of "one war." The military advantages of guerrillas—mobility, freedom from logistical tethers, good intelligence, surprise, etc.—are studied, and counter-measures are developed. Irregular and covered terrain is considered a primary condition for guerrilla warfare, as is the complicity of a coerced population. Therefore, counterinsurgent troops are trained in jungle warfare, and are taught to WHAM (Win Hearts and Minds).

The desire for technical experience has given U.S. officials their only credible, though infrequently expressed, justification for invading Vietnam. In 1963, Gen. Maxwell Taylor explained to a Congressional committee:

> Here we have a going laboratory where we see subversive insurgency, the Ho Chi Minh doctrine, being applied in all its forms. This has been a challenge not just for the armed services, but for several of the agencies of government, as many of them are involved in one way or another in South Vietnam. On the military side, however, we have recognized the importance of the area as a laboratory. We have teams out there looking at the equipment requirements of this kind of guerrilla warfare. We have rotated senior officers through there, spending several weeks just to talk to people and

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get the feeling of the operation, so even though not regularly assigned to Vietnam, they are carrying their experience back to their own organizations.

Six years and at least 4 million casualties later, General Westmoreland said that Vietnam had in fact been a valuable laboratory for testing new weapons and techniques; that the "lessons" and "devices" coming out of there are "revolutionizing" the techniques of warfare; that having inflicted in Vietnam "over two-thirds of enemy casualties," long-range artillery and the air force have proved their capacity to "rain destruction anywhere on the battlefield within minutes . . . whether friendly troops are present or not"; that with new electronic devices the enemy can be mechanically located, tracked and targetted; and that technology will achieve a "tremendous economy of manpower." The General is technically accurate; he may even be right in believing that "no more than ten years" separate us from the "automated battlefield." If that is so, U.S. withdrawal may yet meet Sir Robert's timetable.

However, the trouble with the tracking, targetting and locating devices is that they are even less capable of distinguishing between civilians and combatants than are the GIs; they cannot even distinguish between human beings and animals. Such, for example, is the defect of that most recent device for counterinsurgency—the "people sniffer." Some purists of pacification disapprove of such weapons, but by so doing they only accuse themselves of inconsistency, for these devices are the logical product of the interaction between counterinsurgency and technology. When a technologically superior country commits itself to developing techniques against a people's war, it must end by producing and using weapons of mass murder.

Orders from Moscow

The conspiratorial theory provides justification for counterinsurgency and foreign intervention. The French theorists were notorious for ascribing all "insurgencies" to communism. In their view Algeria's FLN was a puppet alternately of Moscow, Peking and Cairo; today their American colleagues view the NLF as a puppet of North Vietnam and/or China. Even Sir Robert Thompson, the shrewdest and by popular acclaim the most cogent exponent of counterinsurgency, begins his first book, *Defeating Communist Insurgency,* with a discussion of communism which, he says, "was no real threat to *the security of the colonial governments or the well-being of the peoples of Southeast Asia*" until after World War II (italics added). Sir Robert is not unique in coupling the security of the foreign presence with the welfare of the natives; his French and American counterparts do the same. Nor is the habit of viewing anti-colonial and radical nationalist movements as facets, or at least dupes, of the international conspiracy uncommon, even among certified "anti-colonialist" American liberals. The association of communism with guerrilla warfare and radical nationalism helps justify U.S. involvement in counterrevolutionary operations ranging from Ethiopia to Uruguay.

The conspiratorial theory of revolution also permits distorted interpretations of the revolutionary process. For example, Sir Robert Thompson believes that the place and time of insurgency depends on "orders from Moscow." He notes that in liberated areas insurgents are "careful to reduce taxes on land and crops well below the government level, or even to remit them for a period." "This," he asserts, "they can afford to do, having no overheads, and still not lack for money." The absence of overheads is not explained; and his suggestion that the Malayan Races Liberation Army, and the NLF (Vietnam) are financially better off than their British and American opponents would be hilarious if it were not so cruel.

A logical component of the conspiratorial theory is the belief, held with particular tenacity by counterrevolutionary army officers, that any revolutionary movement is inspired, directed and controlled from abroad. The sanctuary from which guerrillas can smuggle supplies and where they train their troops is considered the primary factor in their success. W. W. Rostow, Special Assistant to President Kennedy, stated in a widely acclaimed speech of 1961 that "We are determined to help destroy this international disease, that is, guerrilla war designed, initiated, supplied, and led from outside an independent nation." Indeed so strong was the belief in the external origins of guerrillas that Washington promoted plans for "offensive use of guerrillas" against undesirable regimes. Their performance in the Bay of Pigs, and inside North Vietnam does not appear to have discouraged the enthusiasts. The *Times* of London (April 20, 1968) reported that (*a*) the South Vietnamese agents were trained by the CIA in Special Forces camps; (*b*) 95 per cent casualties were admitted in 1963 ("a complete fiasco"); and (*c*) these operations became a conduit for opium trade.

It is hard to comment briefly on such simplification of a complex problem. An active sanctuary can be very important, especially in cases where a great power intervenes with its full might. However, it is not essential to success. In Cuba, Yugoslavia and China the revolutionaries did not have active sanctuaries. In Burma, and to a lesser extent in Greece, sanctuaries proved of limited value. Neither the extremely effective Morice line in Algeria, nor the Lattre line around the Red River Delta nor the armored Ping-Han Japanese railroad in North China had much effect on the outcome of these wars. Politically and militarily, revolutionary guerrillas tend to make a fetish of self-reliance, and can go on fighting indefinitely even if infiltration from across the border stops. There is overwhelming evidence that, before massive U.S. escalation of the war necessitated Northern aid, the NLF was entirely self-sufficient in South Vietnam; the bulk of its arms was captured or bought from Saigon. John Mecklen, a former U.S. senior diplomat in Saigon, put it succinctly when he stated (*Mission in Torment*) that the interdiction of Northern supplies to South Vietnam would weaken the Vietcong "probably not much more than the efficiency of the Pentagon would be reduced if the air-conditioning were shut off."

On the other hand, pressure by the incumbent or occupying army for conventional attack on an external sanctuary is a good indicator that the war has been lost on the home ground. When they engage in revolutionary warfare, professional armies trained for conventional combat follow a vicious logic of escalation which derives from acute frustration over a foe so elusive as to put in question, not only their effectiveness but the very validity of their training and organization. Moreover, the morale of professional soldiers cannot be maintained if they know

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they are fighting against a popular revolution. Hence, the compulsion to believe that behind the popular behavior lies the terror of an army trained, equipped and directed by a foreign power, and the wish to draw the enemy into open battles. (Military officers often attest that they subject civilians to artillery fire and air raids in the hope that, deprived of civilian cover, the guerrillas will be forced to come out and fight a major engagement.)

Since reprisals against the population fail to produce the desired result, carrying the war to some other sovereign nation becomes the only road to a conventional showdown. In Algeria, it led the French to participate in the invasion of Suez, then to a single bombing raid of the Tunisian border town of Sakiet Sidi Youssef, which produced considerable international protest, including that of John F. Kennedy. Had the French Government succumbed to the urgings of its army, France would have been the first power to violate the international practice of respecting the rights of sanctuary—a principle that was observed in Korea, Greece, Cyprus and Malaya. We can guess what the United States might do if the Vietnamese were to bomb its sanctuaries in Thailand or the Pacific Ocean. But what position will it take, as the major world power, when Portugal, Rhodesia and South Africa follow its example and invade the African "sanctuaries" of their opponents? When practiced by a superpower, counterinsurgency involves the progressive breaking of the few rules that help keep potentially conflagrating conflicts within national boundaries.

Who Builds; Who Destroys

The revolutionary movement is believed to enjoy considerable advantage because, in the words of W. W. Rostow, "its task is merely to destroy, while the government must build and protect what it is building." Whether seriously held or consciously contrived, the view contradicts the findings of those who have studied and observed these movements. Given the inevitable, and generally vast, disparity of military strength between the guerrillas and the government, the success of a revolutionary movement depends on covert and sustained support from a substantial portion of the population. Revolutionary warfare does not occur from simple discontent of the sort that produces riots and demonstrations but from a sense of desperation and a determination to end injustices, foreign occupation and humiliation. It demands patience under prolonged suffering, and a resolute conspiracy of silence and militancy. A people can summon up such strength only if it feels morally alienated from its formal rulers, when the latter's title to authority is actively rejected by the masses.

Once a revolutionary movement enters the guerrilla phase, its central objective is to confirm and perpetuate the moral isolation of the discredited regime by creating "parallel hierarchies." The major task of the movement, then, is not to outfight but to out-legitimize and out-administer the government. It must establish a measure of land reform, reduce rents, equalize wages, build an administrative structure to collect taxes, provide some education and social welfare, and maintain a modicum of economic activity. A revolutionary guerrilla movement which did not have these constructive concerns and structures to fulfill its obligations to the populace would degenerate into banditry. Even while clandestine, the parallel government must prove its efficacy, and maintain a measure of accountability to the population. These are not easy tasks, nor destructive undertakings. It would be a rare revolutionary war in which the government's destruction of civilian population and property did not surpass, by a wide margin, the guerrillas' selective terror and sabotage.

The liberal-reformist theorists of pacification have gained a certain comprehension of the interdependence of political, military and psychological factors in revolutionary warfare. While still holding that guerrilla wars result from conspiracy and are waged by remote control, they see that the cooperation, or at least the neutrality, of a passive population is essential to their success. They recognize that politics plays the dominant role in such conflicts, and that, for revolutionaries, civilians are and remain the primary subject of attention. They admit the central importance of "ideology" and a "cause" around which the masses can be mobilized, and allow that acute grievances stimulate popular support for revolutionaries.

Having understood that much, these theorists draw heavily on what they construe to be the revolutionary model. They search for a counter-ideology to compete with the revolutionary one. Strategic hamlets are the intended equals of popular base areas. Psychological warfare counters revolutionary political work. Pacification teams duplicate the revolutionary cadres. Re-education centers seek to reverse the guerrillas' commitment.

Remembering the Redskin

The limited insight into the revolutionary process is dissipated by the colonial antecedents of counterinsurgency, its bureaucratic bias, and continued focus on coercion as a means of obtaining popular support. Since classical liberalism provides little justification for counterrevolutionary involvements abroad, pacification theorists seek it in related Western traditions. This invariably entails a revival of the colonial and conservative ethos of the nation. The French, much like their American colleagues, emphasize that "pacification" is part of the Western tradition, that conventional warfare gained ascendancy only during the two World Wars, and that it is again being superseded by "limited," unconventional conflicts. In their search for Western models and cultural continuity, the French theorists invoked the heyday of colonialism. They frequently cited the colonizers of North Africa—General Bugeaud, Marshals Lyautey and Gallieni. They extolled the doctrine of these men on the identity of civilian and military authority, the role of *officier-administrateur* and *officier-educateur*; they emulated their methods.

In the United States the experience with the Indians and other colonial exploits provide the source of inspiration. "It is ironic that we Americans have to learn this military lesson again in the twentieth century, . . ." wrote Roger Hilsman. After reminding his audience of American experiences in irregular warfare, in "Indian fighting," he recalls the colonization of the Philippines:

> We Americans have also forgotten that it was we who fought one of the most successful counter-guerrilla campaigns in history—in the Philippines back at the turn of the century. We learned some fundamental military

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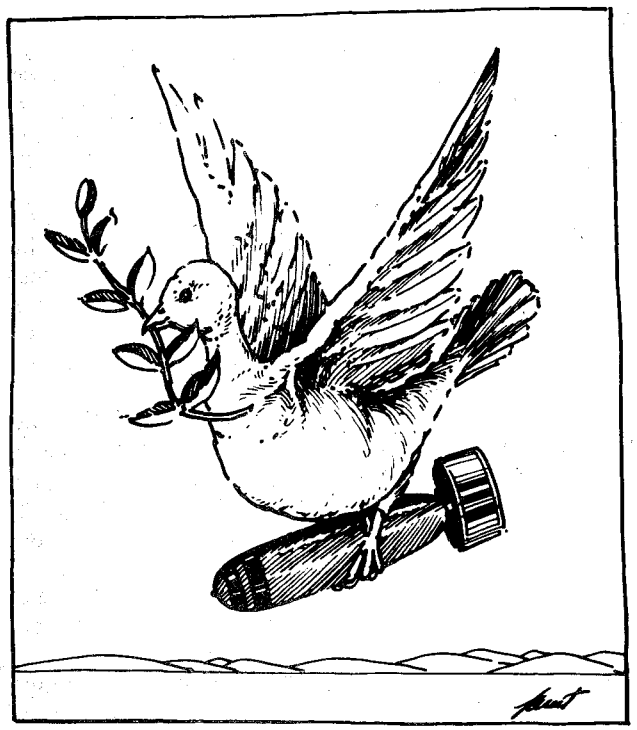

lessons then, and it is time we remembered them. . . .

Mr. Hilsman then recites some gory details, and draws some "fundamental lessons" from the defeat of the "extremists" and "bands of religious fanatics" who were vile enough to resist foreign occupation. The lessons include: (*a*) Maximum use of native mercenaries, as demonstrated by the "fabulous exploits" of the "famed Philippine constabulary." (*b*) Leadership role for Americans—"over each group [of native recruits] we put a trained American officer—a bold and determined leader." (*c*) Adoption of the "Indian fighting" tactic of surprise and night-time attacks—"the solution is to adopt the same weapons to fight him." Mr. Hilsman does not mention that the "successful" Philippine campaign was, in the words of Bernard Fall, ". . . the bloodiest colonial war (in proportion to population) ever fought by a white power in Asia; it cost the lives of 300,000 Filipinos."

Despite a rhetoric that stresses the primacy of politics and calls peaceful revolution the goal, the liberal-reformists treat counterinsurgency essentially as an administrative problem, subject to managerial and technical solutions. Even Sir Robert Thompson, who shows keen understanding of some aspects of revolutionary warfare, sees the problem from a fundamentally bureaucratic viewpoint. "The bias of this book," he says in the introduction of his highly acclaimed *Defeating Communist Insurgency,* "is heavily weighted on the administrative and other aspects of an insurgency." He offers a detailed and technically impeccable critique of the weaknesses of counterinsurgency in Vietnam—cabinet-style government is lacking, the country is divided into too many provinces, hamlets are too small to be viable administrative units, the army has become larger than the police, security forces are fragmented, strategic hamlets are carelessly administered.

Sir Robert's criticism is correct but irrelevant, for no amount of bureaucratic wisdom could win the war in Vietnam. A relevant analysis would consider the actual or potential legitimacy of the local as well as national authority represented by the Saigon regime, and would appraise honestly the causes and character of the linkages between the revolutionary movement and the Vietnamese masses. But the colonial and bureaucratic mentality that wages counterinsurgency precludes such objectivity.

'Understanding' the 'Problem'

As noted earlier, revolutionary warfare demands the development of new styles and institutions before power can be attained. In order to elicit, under conditions of extreme stress, full and voluntary participation by the people, the revolutionary leaders and cadres must form organic ties with them. Revolutionary style and institutions are most successful when they are qualitatively different from the existing ones and, at the same time, appeal to the deepest and most natural yearnings of the masses. In revolutions, therefore, life begins to manifest itself in forms that are incomprehensible to bureaucrats and social engineers. Wolin and Schaar's analysis (in "Berkeley: The Battle of People's Park," *New York Review of Books,* June 19, 1969) of the "educational bureaucracy" applies admirably to the counterinsurgency experts: "The bureaucratic search for 'understanding' does not begin in wonder, but in the reduction of the world to the ordinary and manageable. In order to deal with the world in the cognitive mode, the world must first be approached as an exercise in 'problem-solving.' " Finding the solution implies devising the right techniques; hence "reality is parsed into an ensemble of discrete though related parts, and each part is assigned to the expert specially assigned to deal with that part."

Examples of the "reduction of the world to the ordinary and manageable" abound in the literature of counterrevolution. One will suffice here: Prof. Ithiel de Sola Pool rules out as "not acceptable" "the inclusion of the Vietcong in a coalition government or even the persistence of the Vietcong as a legal organization in South Vietnam." That yields him a problem: "the Vietcong is too strong to be simply beaten or suppressed." Whereupon cognitive dissonance theory suggests the solution: "discontented leadership" has "the potential for making a total break when the going gets too rough." The latter having been achieved by American firepower, the Vietcong will need "a political rationalization for changing sides." Pacification must address itself to this task. The Vietcong "image of reality" and "naive ideology," which regards the Saigon government as consisting of America's puppets and the peasants' exploiters, must be replaced by a more realistic view. Toward this end reforms should be introduced; and the Vietcong cadres who will then desert should be given the opportunity to serve the government.

Prof. de Sola Pool is no novice in political analysis; he is chairman of the Political Science Department at M.I.T. Nor is he a stranger to Vietnam; over the years he has been conducting research there for the Pentagon. Yet, that is how he understands the dedication and motivation of the men who have successfully resisted, for more than two bloody decades, the fully employed might of one great power and one superpower. In counterrevolution, political analysis bows to the pathology of bureaucratic perception.

Similarly, while the counterrevolutionaries display deep

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interest in revolutionary programs and organization, they see these as being opportunistically and instrumentally motivated. For example, land reform by revolutionaries is thought to be an instrument for establishing control in the countryside, not as the positive outcome of the complex interaction between the revolutionary movement and the masses, nor as the result of strongly held convictions. "In many cases," writes Douglas Pike, the U.S. Government's most renowned expert on Vietnam, of the NLF land reform, "this amounted to a virtual bribe; the rural Vietnamese was offered the thing he wanted above all else: Land." He does not say in his book, *Vietcong*, why Saigon and the United States have been unwilling or unable to offer a similar "bribe," nor what happens to the peasant's land when the government regains control of a village.

How the Thread Was Lost

It is natural that their own opportunism and preoccupation with stability and control should lead these theorists at first to qualify, then to distort, and finally to abandon their central, and only positive theme—that revolutionary warfare has its basis in acute grievances, and that the achievement of social, economic and political progress will reduce the chances of its outbreak and/or success.

The qualification begins with the argument that, although "modernization" is essential in the "long run," social and economic inequities and injustices pose no real threat to stability until they are exploited by conspirators. The essential requirements of stability are, therefore, efficient administration ("that 'steel frame' in which India takes such just pride . . ." says Hilsman); and policing of the population. Hence, reforms are seen only as useful auxiliaries to "pacification." Hilsman concludes: "To summarize my feeling on popularity [of government], reform, and modernization: (*1*) they are important ingredients but are not the determinants of events; (*2*) their role must be measured more in terms of their contribution to physical security than we generally realize." As the dialectic of pacification approaches its denouement, a counterrevolutionary "revisionism" emerges from these qualifications that is totalitarian in precept, genocidal in effect. It postulates that the population's behavior, not its attitude, the revolutionary infrastructure's destruction, not the establishment of a government's popularity, are the operative factors in defeating "insurgency."

The distortion develops, among other reasons, from a continuing conviction that "coercion" and "terror" are the bases of the guerrillas' mass support. At their best, counterinsurgency experts display obvious contradiction between their rhetoric and their perception of reality. Sir Robert states that the "Communists are normally careful, however, not to murder a popular person before he has been discredited . . . are careful not to undertake general terror against the population as a whole. . . . Terror is more effective when selective. This allows the Communist behavior toward the people as a whole to be good and strict discipline is used to enforce it." Yet he describes it as a "policy of wholesale murder . . . designed to keep the local population completely cowed."

Similarly CIA specialist Douglas Pike presents considerable evidence that except in the rarest instance, the NLF's use of sabotage and assassination is sociologically selective, politically judicious, and psychologically liberating. Yet his conclusions stand out in glaring opposition to his facts. One is struck by the schizophrenic quality of his study. Such distorted appraisals provide justification for the government's "counter-terror," which begins with "selective" reprisals only to escalate into massive and indiscriminate violence.

The fact is, however that a highly committed but covert civilian support cannot be obtained at gun point. Only degenerate or defeated guerrillas are known to have risked the loss of mass support by terrorizing civilians. In order to be effective, terror must be regarded by the people at large as an extra-governmental effort to dispense justice long overdue; and it must have the effect of freeing oppressed communities from the constraints of coercive, illegitimate authority.

Given their low opinion of the masses, incumbents belatedly discover that their "counter-terror" produces results quite opposite from those expected or desired. This realization increases their frustration and feeling of moral isolation. Instead of being a corrective, this late and hazy perception of reality only augments their desperation and brings incredible acts of inversion. For example, the bombing and burning of villages are often justified on the ground that the affected villagers will blame the Vietcong for "exposing" them to government reprisals; it is believed that the enemy thus loses popular support.

Since they are interested only in operational payoffs, the counterinsurgents' investigation into revolutionary theory and practice tends to be selective, superficial and systems-oriented. For example, the military writings of Mao Tse-tung are reproduced and cited out of their political context; their specific, local character is ignored, and Mao is presented as a system-builder, rather than the leader of a historical revolution. "Systems" orientation as well as the conspiratorial view produce a bias in favor of seeking similarities among revolutions. Hence, the theorists often overlook the fact that, despite many similarities with the Chinese, the Vietnamese, Algerians and Cubans fought very different wars, and owed little to Mao's "doctrine." At the same time, these same theorists rarely acknowledge that the similarities among those revolutions result more from common conditions (e.g., foreign occupation) than from a common doctrine or source of conspiracy.

The counterrevolutionists are ultimately concerned with order more than participation, with control more than the consent of the governed, with stability more than change. As a result, their prescriptions combine a considerable technical expertise with an oblique if not altogether distorted view of the needs and demands of the people. Their indebtedness to what they construe to be the insurgent model is unmistakable; but their understanding of it remains crooked. The "reflection in the mirror is sharp," wrote Peter Paret of the French counterrevolutionary doctrine in Algeria, "while the thing reflected remains shadowy." And so we return to Stone's classic description of these men, "watching a dance from outside through heavy plate glass windows. They see the motions but they can't hear the music. . . ."

Incumbents are by definition incapable of seriously seeking the removal of the causes upon which a successful revolution may be based. France, America and their local collaborators could not credibly claim national liberation

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to be their goals in Algeria and Vietnam. Algerian *colons* and Vietnamese landlords, who formed the backbone of incumbency, could not be serious about instituting meaningful land reforms. Lacking a genuine revolutionary, even reformist, commitment, unable or unwilling to acknowledge the real aspirations of the people, the counter-revolutionists miss the crux of the matter. Hence, they progressively give up on winning the hearts, and concentrate instead on conquering the minds ("it's the minds that matter," says Sir Robert), and destroying the bodies. It is a nemesis of the liberal-reformist approach that it breeds among its believers contempt for the very liberal values and democratic institutions which they claim to represent.

Imported Ideology

Contemporary revolutions have been occurring in the non-Western world, but to a man the counterinsurgency theorists are Westerners. More than their native clients they need ideological and moral arguments to justify their intervention. Hence the counterinsurgent ideology seldom develops in response to local needs; it is mechanically manufactured or imported, and characteristically lacks not only native roots but even the necessary adaptations to local culture and values. In his famous *Foreign Affairs* article (October 1964), Gen. Edward G. Lansdale, the high priest of counterinsurgency in America, stated that the "Communists have let loose a revolutionary idea in Vietnam and that it will not die by being ignored, bombed or smothered by us." The answer, says the General, is to oppose the Communist idea with a better idea. . . ." And to do so "on the ground itself," he proposes that the United States take two steps to establish a "political base":

> First . . . state political goals founded on principles cherished by free men, which the Vietnamese share . . .; Second . . . start the Vietnamese moving realistically toward those political goals. In essence, this is revolutionary warfare, the spirit of the British Magna Carta, the French "Liberté, égalité, fraternité" and our own Declaration of Independence.

The ideology of the Vietnamese "revolution" then is to be British, French or American.

General Lansdale devotes the bulk of his article to advocating further American intervention in native affairs in order to endow the Vietnamese with the "will to be free." The "thesis" of his article is that, due to the extent of our involvement, and because everything depends on that motivation, Americans cannot escape responsibility [of "finding the motivation for conducting successful counterinsurgency effort"]. The "great lesson" of Malaya and the Philippines is that "there must be a heartfelt *cause* to which the legitimate government is pledged, a cause which makes stronger appeal to the people than the Communist cause. . . ." Given the "correct" use of the "right" cause, the anti-Communist fight becomes a pro-people fight.

Search for an ideology led the French theorists to propound national-Socialist and Catholic-authoritarian ideologies which they thought would appeal to Algerian Muslims and which, strangely enough, invoked the revolutionary spirit of 1789. (The American theorists refer to those of 1776.) General Lansdale is moved to propose (*1*) a direct American involvement in Vietnamese politics in order to supply it with an ideology; and (*2*) a rewriting of Vietnam's recent history in order to produce a "heartfelt cause." He assumes that the natives lack the spirit to produce "a dynamic political answer with which to meet and overcome foreign ideas introduced by the Communists." Like all counterinsurgent theorists, he fails to examine the components of his local adversary's ideology and organization; if he did, he might be less certain that Vietnamese culture wants dynamism. Instead, he believes that "lacking such a dynamic answer," Vietnam should not be left to its own political resources. Hence, the "concept that the United States should give advice and counsel on waging revolutionary warfare . . . involves exporting American political principles. . . ." He argues that Americans have the added responsibility to implement the exported principles, and cites occupied Japan and West Germany as successful examples of American-sponsored political development. And, of course, the colonial example is the most pertinent: "We tutored the Philippine people and encouraged them in self-government in the same brotherly spirit which elsewhere could make all the difference in struggles between freedom and communism."

Lansdale's views deserve attention because they represent the collective thinking of liberal America's foremost scholars, and because they still form the basis for policy. (In addition to its occupation of Vietnam, the United States maintains counterinsurgency programs and commitments in some twenty underdeveloped countries.) The colonialist character of the approach, the damages it is doing to the disadvantaged, the validity of analogies with postwar Germany and Japan, and the correctness of considering the Philippines a success, have been discussed elsewhere. It should be noted, however, that though foreign attempts to foster political development are doomed to fail, they often result in Western military interventions and the enlargement of local conflicts. Improved techniques and professionalism are not the chief ingredients of political and social development. It requires a vision of society, the

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choice of values and goals, and these are not exportable goods or skills to be packaged as part of a foreign aid program. Furthermore, no foreign power can endow a native government with legitimacy, nor with the will and capacity to open channels for peaceful change. On the contrary, such identification erodes a regime's legitimacy.

Myth as Policy

Diem is a case in point. It is fashionable now to deplore him, who had once been billed as a democratic alternative to Ho Chi Minh, for his many failings. Yet few liberals have acknowledged that it was morbid optimism on their part to expect an absentee aristocrat, propped by American dollars and guns, to substitute for the heroic leaders and cadres who had devoted a lifetime to the independence of their country, and to defeat a movement whose organic ties with the peasants were cemented by a bitter struggle for social justice no less than national liberation.

Given the historical situation, Diem had little choice; his only possible weapons were a power apparatus to regiment the population, all-out support of the Catholic minority and the privileged, and widespread terror. These were not the aberrations of a program but the program itself. The fundamental responsibility for the totalitarian and corrupt character of successive Saigon regimes does not lie with poor Diem, or the degenerate generals who once collaborated with colonial France and are now sanctioning the systematic destruction of a people they claim to govern. It rests with those who created Diem, and still sustain in authority men who can be regarded by their countrymen only as traitors.

Myths play an important role in politics, but the men involved in counterinsurgency possess a special capacity for myth making. It has been widely noted that, despite its rhetoric of winning the hearts and minds of the people through progress and participation, counterinsurgency often culminates in massive official crimes against the population. One reason is that counterinsurgency's myths are totally contrived and, lacking a basis in popular perceptions, fail to elicit a favorable response. The French counterinsurgency propagandists spoke of Bugeaud and Lyautey as the liberators of North Africa, and invoked French history and heroes to promote Algerian loyalty to France. General Lansdale typifies the counterinsurgent version of Vietnam's contemporary history which, whatever its value in boosting GI morale, can only insult Vietnamese sensibilities.

"The great cause in Vietnam which last united the overwhelming majority of Vietnamese . . . was independence," reports the General, and proceeds to expropriate the *nationalist cause*. On just one page he makes the following assertions: (*1*) "Nearly all" the Vietnamese leaders on the American side fought to win independence by revolutionary means; (*2*) the tragedy of Vietnam's revolutionary war of independence was that its "Benedict Arnold was successful"; (*3*) Ho helped by other Russian and Chinese agents (Giap, Truong Chinh, Pham Van Dong) "secretly changed the goals of the struggle"; (*4*) in 1954 the Vietminh was widely hated by the Vietnamese people; (*5*) "the national revolution was reborn in South Vietnam when Ngo Dinh Diem placed the fate of the nation in the people's hands in 1955" and was elected President almost "unanimously"; (*6*) soon after this popular election, the Communists, fearful of losing the plebiscite the Geneva Accords required, obtained its annulment.

Lansdale's academic colleagues express much the same view—less precisely and more pompously. Their writings belong in the lowest category of colonial historiography. It is a measure of their capacity for self-deception that after more than a decade of counterinsurgency, these analysts and policy makers still hope that given the protracted, and increasingly air-oriented protective shield of American military power the Saigon generals (all of whom fought with the French puppet army against Indochina's independence), landlords and other war profiteers will produce a viable government in Vietnam. One wonders how a program whose architects and administrators have so little respect for the history, intelligence, wisdom and patriotic feelings of the Vietnamese people could expect, much less deserve, to "win their hearts and minds."

There are innumerable examples of what "going deep into every local revolutionary problem and helping solve them" in "brotherly spirit" and in accordance with the "revolutionary spirits of 1776" has come to mean in Vietnam. William Nighswonger, a senior pacification official in Vietnam during 1962-64, cites an AID report (March 1965), comparing the "new life hamlets" with the "Vietcong villages," stated that the latter were well-organized, clean, economically self-supporting, and had active self-defense systems. New canals were being dug, pineapples were under cultivation, cottage industry flourished, and there was even a relocation program for younger families. The report added that "Vietcong strength in the countryside has made a 'quantum leap' from its position of early 1962," i.e., after the USOM and National Police had unsuccessfully experimented in the area with "population and resources control methods." But it welcomed a compensating factor: "The counterinsurgent military capability was revolutionized by substantial American troop inputs" which, of course, permitted new "experiments" with "material and human resources control" to be carried on. These were necessary because, "Given the enormous numbers of South Vietnamese citizens presently allied with the Vietcong (for whatever reasons), the recovery of these peasants for the national cause must be made one of the central tasks of the pacification enterprise." Counterinsurgency possesses an unremitting logic of escalation.

A previous AID study (February 1965) had mentioned some difficulties in the pacification program—government forces "stealing, robbing, raping . . . in rural areas." An example is cited of an ARVN officer who killed a draft dodger, "took his heart and liver out and had them cooked," after which "the heart and liver were eaten by a number of soldiers." Nighswonger considers such conduct as counterproductive, in view of the contrasting Communist behavior. The "success of pacification requires," he perceptively points out, "that there be survivors to be pacified," and given the "sheer magnitude of American, Korean, Australian and indigenous Vietnamese forces" it is sometimes difficult to insure this minimum condition.

By 1970 a third of the Vietnamese fell into the "recovered" category. The experts saw in their plight an opportunity, and even progress. In a statement to the Senate Refugee Subcommittee (September 30, 1965), Roger

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Hilsman said: "The refugees, in my judgment, are the key to such a program [winning an honorable peace]. In the first place, they are a substantial number of the people of Vietnam, the people whose allegiance must be won, and because their plight is so visible they will be a test case, a symbol of whether the government does indeed care." He conceded that the allies "working with the refugees start out with a strike against them" because "it was not Vietcong terrorism" but "American and Vietnamese bombing and shelling" that "drove the refugees from their ancestral homes to the cities and towns." This, however, is no reason for the United States to end its occupation; in fact, it increases American responsibility to go on—"all this means that even greater effort must be made to win over these people, precisely because of their initial resentment." Helping the refugees, however, is not the goal but a useful means of winning the war. Mr. Hilsman added: "But beyond winning the allegiance of the refugees, it seems to me that they offer a positive opportunity for furthering an effective counterinsurgency program."

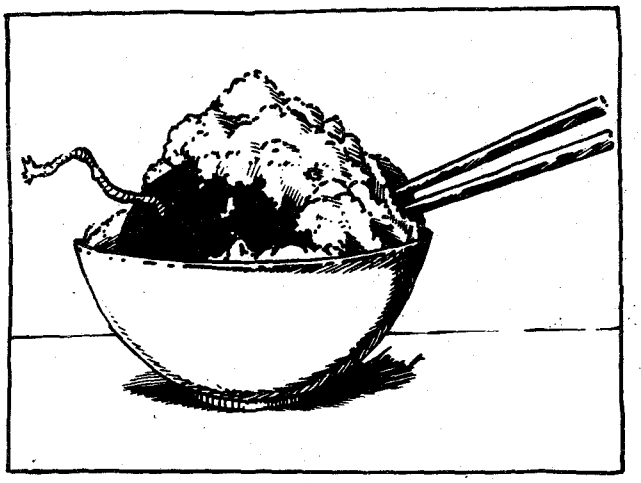
Mr. Hilsman said in his testimony that such a program had yet to be tried in South Vietnam, "although there have been one or two false starts," adding that "Ambassador Lodge, however, is determined to persuade both the Vietnamese and the Americans concerned to make the effort." Mr. Hilsman, like General Lansdale who under Ambassador Lodge headed the Senior Liaison Office in Saigon during the worst years of escalation, judged the bombing of North Vietnam to be a tactical mistake. But neither man will probably ever acknowledge that the decisions to bomb the North, and to tear the South to bits by saturation bombing and "substantial American troop inputs" were the direct results of the failure of counterinsurgency, which had been tried for a decade.

Any Price for Victory

Counterinsurgency experts believe in what one may call the "doctrine of permanent counterinsurgency." No price —not the distortion of their professed values by the acceptance of totalitarian practices and institutions, not the destruction of a culture, not the dispossession and displacement of a people—is ultimately too high for these men who play with the lives and future of the masses in the manner of obsessed gamblers intent on a final win. They tend to explain away their failures by pointing to specific flaws which only underscore the need for "greater effort"—paucity of trained personnel, sabotage by politicians or conventional generals, the failure of public will at home to sustain a protracted struggle.

The doctrine of permanent counterinsurgency presupposes a refusal to acknowledge the absence or loss of governmental legitimacy. Mao Tse-tung told Edgar Snow that he had read Gen. Maxwell Taylor's *The Uncertain Trumpet,* and some of the U.S. anti-guerrilla manuals which sought to apply Mao's ideas in reverse. Their weakness, Mao said, is that they ignore "the decisive political fact that . . . governments cut off from the masses could not win against wars of liberation."

I. F. Stone commented in February 1965: "The failure to grasp Mao's point in South Vietnam does not arise from any special stupidity. The trouble is that the situation there has degenerated to the point where any government which was not cut off from the masses would respond to their war weariness. It would open negotiations with the rebels and ask our troops to leave." Fear of precisely that development led the very men who had helped install Diem to sanction his overthrow and murder; it was also the cause of the brutal suppression of the Buddhists in 1966, and of the continuing repression of neutralists, and the refusal to accept a coalition government as part of a negotiated settlement.



If Roger Hilsman, friend and adviser to the Kennedys, considers the refugees an opportunity, Prof. Samuel P. Huntington, chairman of the Department of Government at Harvard, and adviser to Presidential aspirant Hubert Humphrey, regards them as an accomplishment. He believes that, by bombing the peasants out of their villages and homes, America accelerated the process of urbanization which has introduced "momentous changes in Vietnamese society during the past five years." He explained (*Boston Globe*, February 17, 1968): "So long as the overwhelming mass of the people lived in the countryside, the Vietcong would win the war by winning control of those people—and they came very close to doing so in both 1961 and 1964. But the American-sponsored urban revolution undercut the Vietcong rural revolution."

Similar claims were made by the French experts for the estimated 3 million displaced Algerians. The main difference between France and the United States is that in France, soldiers, not professors, dominated this field. Moral distortion and intellectual degeneration are inherent in the theory and practice of counterinsurgency. One of his colleagues may have been too harsh in judging Professor Huntington, but metaphorically he summed up the fate of the majority in this field when he said publicly that "Sam has simply lost the ability to distinguish between urbanization and genocide."

From 'Hearts and Minds' to 'Law and Order'

I noted earlier that the dialectic of counterinsurgency leads these theorists to qualify, distort and finally forsake their liberal-reformist pretenses. I have discussed the qualifications, and given some examples of the distortions, which include Professor Huntington's euphoria on the urbanization process. As their experiments in counterinsurgency fail, despite the laboratory conditions permitted

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by the strategic hamlets, re-education camps, refugee population, and the protection of mighty armed forces, they progressively abandon their only positive theme—the need for "winning the hearts and minds." Failure augments their sense of isolation from and hostility toward the mass. Since their attitudes and politics are concerned primarily with establishing order and stability, they begin to jettison their reformist and liberal pretenses when these fail to bring operational payoffs, and seek justifications for massive destruction, repressive measures and new avenues to victory. Lately, the American experts have been providing a rich harvest of "revisionist" literature on counterinsurgency. These form the bases and provide the rationale for the strategy of attrition which was adopted by Johnson following the Tet offensive of 1968 and which, under Nixon, came to be described as Vietnamization.

Recent interest in elaborating and supplying empirical content to the "theory of relative deprivation" is a case in point. It postulates, to the accompaniment of much jargon and a depressing excess of statistics, what students of politics have observed since the advent of industrialism—that the "mobile" social classes, the people who are aware of social and economic gaps, the hopeful rather than the abject poor, are most inclined to agitate for change. When applied to specific situations by the counterinsurgent scholars, this perfectly viable theory produces novel conclusions. Thus a well-known "statistical analysis of factors affecting government control" in Vietnam "reveals" a positive correlation between "inequality of land tenure" and the "extent of government control." It concludes that the "provinces where few peasants own their own land, the distribution of land-holdings is unequal, and land redistribution has not been carried out" are "precisely the areas of greatest security. The observed relationship is between greater inequality and greater control—not the reverse." The author of this RAND study (Edward J. Mitchell: "Insurgency and Inequality: A Statistical Analysis of South Vietnam") believes that the "behavioural explanation" for this phenomenon lies "in the relative docility of poorer peasants and the firm authority of landlords in the 'more' feudal areas." Mr. Mitchell has used questionable methods and assumptions to reach this conclusion. It is typical of counterrevolutionary analysts that one disregards even the obvious explanation for the correlation between landlordism and government control: landlords have influence in the Saigon government and have troops sent to protect their lands. "Secure areas" after all are secure only in that they are occupied by government or U.S. troops.

Given a preoccupation against revolutions and for stability, such insights can only cool the liberals' enthusiasm for reforms and augment their emphasis on law and order. In an important policy statement issued by the Freedom House Public Affairs Institute, the "moderate segment of the academic community" (which included some of the most prestigious and liberal American scholars on Asia) emphasized that "Indeed many types of reform increase instability, however desirable and essential they may be in long-range terms. For people under siege there is no substitute for security." And Prof. Ithiel de Sola Pool has this to say: "In the Congo, in Vietnam, in the Dominican Republic, it is clear that order depended on somehow compelling newly mobilized strata to return to a measure of passivity and defeatism from which they have recently been aroused by the process of modernization."

In another revisionist essay (Chapter 3 of *United States Policy and the Third World*) Charles Wolf of the RAND Corporation questions the "core of currently accepted doctrine about insurgency," which admits the "central role of popular support" to its success and which holds that "socio-economic improvement programs, especially in rural areas, are essential for an effective counter-insurgency effort." Belief in popular support and reforms, Wolf says, "has an undeniable appeal to those grounded in Western ideologies and values. It strikes a particularly responsive cord in the Populist symbols and sentiments of American tradition, but it may be stronger on symbolism and sentiment than on realism." Whereupon he produces a formula suited to the needs of the natives:

> *Given the characteristics of transitional societies in less developed countries,* an effective insurgency and guerrilla activity can grow and gather momentum among a population that is passive or even hostile to the movement. [Italics are his.] The growth of the Vietcong and of the Pathet Lao probably occurred despite the opposition of a large majority of the people in both Vietnam and Laos. . . . *By the same token, successful counterinsurgency programs can be conducted among a rural populace that is passive or even hostile, rather than loyal, to the government.* [My italics.]
>
> What an insurgent movement requires for successful and expanding operations is not popular support, in the sense of attitudes of identification and allegiance, but rather a supply of certain inputs (e.g., food, recruits, information) at reasonable cost, interpreting "cost" to include expenditure of coercion as well as of money. These costs may be "reasonable" without popular sympathy for the insurgents, *and, conversely, the costs may be considerably augmented without any increase in allegiance to the government . . . resource flows may be interdicted, or made more costly to the insurgency without any increase in the popular support for the government.* [My italics.]

The ground is thus prepared for Wolf to introduce an "alternative approach" which postulates that the "main concern of counterinsurgency efforts should be to influence the behavior of the population rather than their loyalties and attitudes." It is not possible even to outline the numerous proposals which emerge from Wolf's application of "input-output" theory to this formulation. Many of them are already part of the American strategy in Vietnam. He argues that "socio-economic improvement programs" may have "no effect or a perverse effect, on the cost and availability of inputs that the insurgents require for their operations." His equation is that if people are well off, so shall be the guerrillas: "The supply of what the insurgents need from the villages may expand and its cost may decline, *nothwithstanding increased popular support for the government.*" [His emphasis.] From this it follows first that "the policies that would increase rural income by raising of food prices, or projects that would increase productivity through the distribution of fertilizers or livestocks may be of negative values during an insurgency." (This may partly explain why the United States spends only about $400 million annually on economic aid to Vietnam, the major portion of this aid enriching the living standards and Swiss accounts of its South

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Vietnamese allies.) Secondly, the government must interdict the guerrillas' supplies. The most common methods of blocking the insurgents' "inputs" are crop defoliation, buffalo killing and the destruction of rural products.

Wolf believes that it is all right to inflict massive penalties on the population, but that these should not be random, lest it become "impossible for the populace to infer anything about the relationship between the harsh conduct of the government forces and their own behavior." After citing some examples ("confiscating of chickens, razing of houses or destruction of villages") of reprisals that have "a place in the counterinsurgency efforts," Wolf reaffirms that *"Whatever* harshness is meted out by government forces [must be] unambiguously recognizable as deliberately imposed because of behavior by the population that contributes to the insurgent movement." Thus it is not surprising that, in contrast to the economic, American military "aid" to Vietnam has been costing, since 1965, an average of about $30 billion a year. The Vietnamese people have been its sole recipients.

The Brutality of Defeat

Since unascertainable amounts of time elapse between the preparation of a proposal and its publication, it is often difficult to say whether analysis only justifies policy or assists also in its formulation. In any case, this new approach which, by Wolf's "admission" differs from the old "only" in "degree," is obviously congenial to the brutal and destructive character which American counterinsurgency acquired in Vietnam when its political defeat had become apparently irreversible.

Prof. Morton H. Halperin, former White House aide and now a Brookings Institution Fellow, provides in *Contemporary Military Strategy* "empirical" proof of the validity of the "behavior not attitude" formula. The United States, he says, "with its vastly superior logistics capability, its heavier fire-power, and its ability to use air power, has been able to prevent large-scale Vietcong victories, regardless of the loyalties of the people." He reports that "American bombing in South Vietnam may have antagonized a number of people; but at the same time it demonstrated to these people that the Vietcong could not guarantee their security as it had been able to do before the bombing. . . ." This proves that "people tend to be motivated, not by abstract appeals, but rather by their perception of the course of action that is most likely to lead to their own personal security. . . ."

But bombs do not break social and political links. Massive reprisals fail to elicit the desired behavior from the people. They do, however, open fresh opportunities for managing and manipulating the beleaguered population. As Wolf puts it, the government must impose "restrictions that limit the availability of resources that the insurgency can draw from the rural areas." Concentration camps, strategic hamlets and "urbanization" are the most common instruments for imposing such control. Sir Robert Thompson judiciously lists some others—preventive detention, identity cards, family photographs, snap checks, inventories of belongings and visitors, and travel restrictions.

The specific recommendations of Wolf's "alternative approach" are also the stock items of counterinsurgency —a system of rewards to "motivate" the killing of guerrillas, severe punishments for cooperation with them, an "incentive system" to encourage defection and intelligence, including a "price" scale on NLF cadres and leaders. His proposal to "buy up" rural supplies in return not for money, which insurgents may use, but for such consumers' products as cannot be of use to guerrillas, is a variant on the older policy of collective confiscations and grain burning. More than ever before, pacification now stands for massive reprisals and regimentation of the population.

That preoccupation with success as well as with management and manipulation lead the experts on counterinsurgency to embrace totalitarian precepts and Fascist practices is most evident in the theory and practice of psychological warfare. Peter Paret has pointed out that the French theorists drew from the Pavlovians the belief that people can be conditioned to think and act in specific ways; Gustav Le Bon taught them lessons on the manipulation of groups and crowds; Eugen Hadamovsky, the Nazi theorist, gave guidance in the use of symbols, slogans, demonstration and violence in forging a mass "will."

Techniques of brainwashing were perfected and widely practiced in the re-education camps where prisoners were divided into hard, soft and curable categories. Paret adds that "To be useful, their theories not only had to explain how to manipulate a mass and re-educate an individual, but also had to insure that the influence exerted was more than temporary." It proved impossible to prevent a brainwashed Muslim from backsliding into nationalism once he had been released from his re-education camp.

Again, the only answer was to seek an increasingly controlled social environment. Col. Roger Trinquier, a leading French theorist, told a journalist in Algeria; "What we have to do is to organize the population from top to bottom. I don't care if you call me a Fascist; but we must have a docile population, every gesture of which shall be subject to our control."

In both Algeria and Vietnam the inner logic and destructive nature of counterinsurgency were fully exposed to the world, stripped of the liberal, reformist pretenses of its practitioners. Yet there might be a fateful difference. Algeria marked the end of France's involvement in counterinsurgency; its exponents ended up in prison or oblivion. Vietnam appears to have been a testing ground and training area rather than the terminal point for American counterrevolution. Its practitioners attend conferences and join public forums to discuss the "lessons" of Vietnam. The American military is known to count among the benefits the unusual opportunity to develop and test new weapons for "irregular" warfare. A new generation of officers and men has gained combat experience in guerrilla warfare in unfamiliar terrain. Lessons learned in Vietnam have led to improved techniques of pacification in the client states of Asia and Latin America.

Developments in Indonesia, Thailand, Guatemala, above all in Laos and Cambodia, indicate that the "lessons" of Vietnam have reinforced the most barbaric and destructive components of counterinsurgency. It is now likely to be practiced in its latest, revised form, which stresses totalitarian controls over the population, massive displacement and dispossession of the peasants, and rapid and ruthless reprisals with maximum reliance on technology—bombings, napalm and defoliation—rather than troops. At a conference on Violence and Social Change,

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organized by the Adlai Stevenson Institute in the summer of 1969, Robert W. Komer, former Deputy Ambassador in charge of the American Pacification Program in Saigon, explained that Vietnam had proved the inefficacy of "gradual" escalation which permitted the "guerrillas" to make "adjustments" and withstand allied pressure. Hence, the "lesson" was to escalate ruthlessly and rapidly; "snow them under," he said.

It is a measure of the helplessness of humanity rather than of freedom in America that, in my concern for the survival of the Indochinese people and culture, I must share public forums with men who, in the opinion of qualified persons, including Gen. Telford Taylor, are at least deserving of trial as criminals of war.

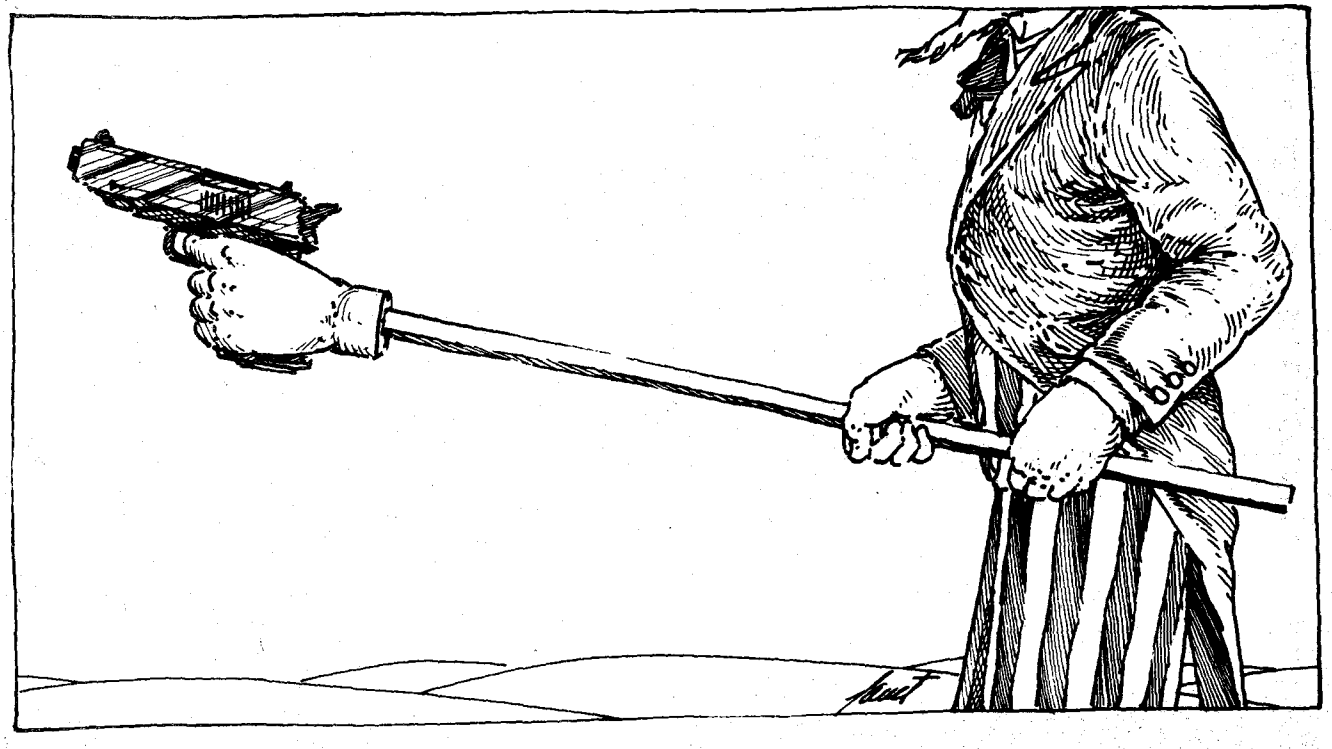
Counterinsurgency Comes Home

A full discussion of the ways in which the practice of counterinsurgency erodes the democratic processes and institutions of metropolitan countries is beyond the scope of this paper. The fall of the Fourth Republic, the French army officers' involvement in the clandestine OAS, and their open rebellion in 1962 are examples for Americans to ponder. The pursuit of counterrevolutionary foreign policy undermines a democracy in many ways. It enhances executive as well as secret service power, over which parliamentary institutions can exercise little or no control, and whose activities public organs (press, political parties, etc.) are normally unable to report and censure. The expanded role of the CIA, and of the armed forces' special branches are examples. As their activities and influence increase, such agencies not only circumvent representative institutions but even begin to infiltrate and corrupt civilian life. The CIA's clandestine use of the National Students Association and of several universities is a case in point.

In order to overcome the checks of parliamentary institutions and public opinion, a government involved in counterinsurgency seeks ways to reduce its accountability to elected bodies, and to manipulate public opinion. Expansion of the secret services is only one of many devices. Another favorite tactic is to employ puppet armies and experts to subvert foreign governments and fight wars by proxy. E. L. Katzenbach stated the proposition in the anthology by T. N. Greene which received the approbation of President Kennedy:

> We need not only troops which can strike on the peripheries of the free world, but also troops which can be sent not merely to fight but also to maintain order. *We need not only useful troops but usable troops—that is to say, troops which are politically expendable,* the kind of troops who can do the job as it is needed without too great a political outcry in a nation like our own which so abhors war. . . ." [Italics added.]

The desire for "usable troops" led the French to rely heavily not only on special units of enlisted men (e. g., the parachutists) and on African regiments but also, and increasingly, on the mercenary Foreign Legion units, composed largely of Germans. As for the Americans, in addition to providing armaments, training and "advisers" to counterrevolutionary clients, they raise secret private armies. The Cuban exiles who invaded Cuba, the murder squads who have been terrorizing the Guatemalan peasants, the *Khmer Serei* who spearheaded the move to overthrow Sihanouk and invade Cambodia, and Vung Pao's clandestine army in Laos are examples. In their Special Warfare units, they have also been recruiting Central and Eastern European exiles. Of them I. F. Stone wrote in 1961: "They seem to come chiefly from right-wing elements. I was told that there were many former Chetniks among them; these were the Royal Yugoslav partisans under Mihailovitch, who collaborated during certain periods with the Nazis. The anonymous memorandum in the *Army Navy Air Force Journal* [April 8, 1961] ends by saying, 'the two names . . . who are most mentionable in



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this field are Colonel Ed. Lansdale, OSO, and Slavko N. Bjelajac, Special Warfare.' When I reached Mr. Bjelajac by phone at the Pentagon, he admitted he had served with the Yugoslav partisan forces under Mihailovitch."

Failure to defeat revolutionaries in protracted war alienates participants in counterinsurgency against the democratic values and institutions of their own country. The war is eventually seen as being lost at home rather than in the field; domestic dissent and divisions contrast with the enviable solidarity and dedication of the enemy; and democratic institutions increasingly appear unworkable in revolutionary settings. The "powerlessness" of the "democratic ideology" was the common complaint among the supporters of counterinsurgency in France. In America too it is becoming a familiar theme, in scholarly analyses no less than political pronouncements.

Disaffection from the existing system occurs also among the opponents of counterrevolutionary war, since their protests produce no result, and new elections, while producing new promises, fail to yield a new policy. The divisions and disillusionments that follow involvement in counterrevolution ultimately reduce the legitimacy of existing institutions, inspire opposition to or contempt for them, and weaken the will to resist their corruption.

Above all, involvement in counterinsurgency politicizes the military and encourages its intrusion into civilian life. In France it produced at first deep extra-constitutional involvement of the military in the political affairs of the country, and finally a rebellion. In the United States public disclosures have now been made of massive military surveillance of civilians. Training and participation in counterinsurgency necessarily involve a recognition of the identity and interrelatedness of civilian and military tasks and authority. It is not realistic to expect that military men who are trained also to traffic in politics will remain apolitical concerning problems at home. A double standard of the army's role abroad and at home becomes especially difficult to maintain when the war is seen as being lost at home. The determination to equip the natives with the "will to fight" emerges eventually in the metropolitan country. The crusade abroad may find expressions at home when the society is viewed as needing moral or political regeneration.

Counterrevolutionary chickens, therefore, have a tendency to return home to roost. Whether the "homecoming" is complete or partial depends on the strains and stresses of involvements abroad, and a government's ability to extricate from the war in good time. The Fourth Republic survived the first Indochinese war but collapsed during the Algerian. It is impossible to tell how many more Vietnams the American Republic can sustain. There is, however, considerable evidence that the forces of law and order, including the Army and several local police departments, are applying the theories of pacification and counter-guerrilla warfare to problems at home. In recent years the Army and Marine Corps have been engaged in research (and presumably training) in "urban-guerrilla warfare." In 1968 a Directorate of Civil Disturbances was established in the Office of Secretary of the Army, and the Pentagon now houses a Situation Room for domestic disturbances.

Less easy to identify, but more pervasive, are the effects that involvement in counterinsurgency abroad have on attitudes toward and styles of dealing with political problems at home. The treatment, in recent years, of dissenters in America is probably not unrelated to the war in Vietnam. Official violence against demonstrators in Chicago during the Democratic Party Convention is one example. Somewhat later, during the demonstrations for a People's Park in Berkeley, helicopters sprayed the CS variety of gas that is widely used in Vietnam but outlawed by the Geneva Conventions. The commander is reported to have regretted the "discomfort and inconvenience to innocent bystanders," adding that "it is an inescapable byproduct of combating terrorists, anarchists, and hard-core militants on the streets and on the campus." Many of the 800 persons arrested reported that they were beaten and tortured, and a district court judge issued restraining orders against such practices in the Santa Rita jail. Alameda County's Sheriff Madigan explained that "We have a bunch of young deputies back from Vietnam who tend to treat prisoners like Vietcong."

The years of Vietnamization have witnessed an acceleration of this trend. The police murder of Fred Hampton and his companion, the killings at Kent State, Jackson and Orangeburg, the offhanded use of conspiracy laws and grand juries against political dissenters indicate an extension of the repressive arm of executive authority. The expansion, admitted and justified by the Attorney General, in the use of unauthorized wire-tapping and electronic surveillance, growing evidence that authorities use agents not only to inform on dissenters but also to provoke them into violence, the justifications offered by Mr. Nixon for the arrest without warrant of some 7,000 demonstrators in Washington, are all indicative of the erosion of civil liberties in the United States. One can only hope that these and other similar incidents do not constitute a preview of things to come.

Drawings by Faust

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Slack Tide of Civilization

THE PASSING OF THE MODERN AGE. *By John Lukacs. Harper & Row. 222 pp. $7.95.*

ROBERT LILIENFELD
Mr. Lilienfeld lectures on sociology at the College of the City of New York.

Books about the mess we are in have become a major industry; here is one more—but a magnificent one, which is in danger of being overlooked in the crowd.

Lukacs' argument is broad in scope but quite simple: we are living in an interregnum, an era of drift and stagnation; the bourgeois age has passed, and nothing has arisen to replace it. Consequently our civilization stagnates, regresses, decays:

> At the beginning of the century the notion that western civilization might collapse occurred but to a handful of people. By the time Spengler was published many more people would entertain such notions. The notion that the breakdown in our civilization is actually occurring has been flooding the unconscious portion of our minds: it it is now swimming up to the very surface of our consciousness. . . .

Periods of stasis have occurred before in Western history, but they have been followed by new developments. Similarly, today, somehow civilization may tap its creative sources again, develop a new view of man and the world and so revitalize itself; or it may collapse into a new dark age, to last no one knows how long. Having stated this theme in outline, Lukacs develops it in detail in a series of chapters devoted to government, international relations, social class, economics, education, art, science, religion, ecology and morals. In sum, they constitute a lucid and realistic survey of a total civilization, a brilliant performance.

In every field of life to which he directs our view, he points out the rot: political forms petrifying into anonymous bureaucratic fiefdoms, spreading the psychology of servitude everywhere; literature offering cynical experiments or screams of anguish, real and simulated; the sciences stagnant, manned by second-raters elaborating conceptions at least fifty years old; family life becoming ever more precarious, unstable, fragmented; schools becoming "daytime custodial prisons, with police patrolling their corridors, where teachers and overgrown boys and girls . . . confront one another with screaming hatred, and concealed weapons"; the movements toward sexual freedom and women's liberation turning into carnivals of pornography and publicity; intellectuals revealing themselves as opportunists and publicity addicts; national states becoming ever more rigid and unimaginative in their policies; racial, tribal, ethnic hostilities intensifying all over the world; whole urban districts being dominated by youth gangs and by drug addicts, with the police becoming highly circumspect and selective in their enforcement of the law. Even our affluence proves to be something other than we expected: never have material goods been so ephemeral, so perishable, and the very money we handle deteriorates as the once solid silver coinage is replaced by ersatz metals. Indeed, we see the material basis of our lives becoming more and more problematic, with inflated populations living in rotting urban centers, totally uprooted from the land and from nature, supported by an increasingly strained technological network of services with an increasingly alienated labor force. If this network should collapse, the mass die-back will eclipse that which occurred after the fall of Rome. Finally, we see the moral character of men deteriorating, with a kind of dispirited attitude of *après moi le déluge* becoming the outlook among those in power, and a blind obsession with the consumer society dominant among the populace. Thus, in each field of society there is a widespread devolution.

Now the details of Lukacs' exposition are not especially original; Julien Benda (*The Treason of the Intellectuals*) told us about the intellectuals years ago; Renato Poggioli (in his *Theory of the Avant-Garde*) and César Graña (in *Modernity and its Discontents*) described the arts in similar terms; Jacques Ellul has made many of the same points; the general framework of the argument is supplied by Lukacs' immersion in the thought of Tocqueville and in Ortega's *The Revolt of the Masses*, and the economic and political arguments by any number of current critics. Lukacs' contribution is that of the child who cannot see the emperor's clothes; neither can we, but we do not draw the conclusions, or do not dare to state them.

In anatomizing the naked emperor, Lukacs examines our own immediate situation by using those historical and sociological categories which we find easy to apply to past eras, or to contemporary but sharply different societies, but which we neglect to apply to our own. In this way, he arrives at a clear view of our historical situation. We live amidst the still thunderous echoes of the collapse of the bourgeois era, the major milestones of which collapse were, of course, the two World Wars (which Lukacs prefers to call the two German wars). How is it that we failed to realize that the bourgeois age was over? Two factors have obscured its passing. The first is what Lukacs describes as the temporary, pseudo-bourgeois restoration in Western Europe, led by the United States after 1945, with the accompanying Americanization of life not merely in Europe but through all the modernizing strata of Asia and Africa. The second factor obscuring this process has been the imagery of Marxism-Leninism in the thought patterns of the West, which depicts the United States, even today, in keeping with outdated social and political categories. The United States, which in many respects has never been bourgeois, is today well along the path to a post-capitalist, bureaucratic technocracy—a development misconceived and misrepresented by our publicist-intellectuals.

Lukacs, incidentally, is especially accurate and enjoyable on the intellectuals:

> The performance of the intelligentsia during the last fifty years has been generally marked by cowardice, opportunism, dishonesty, and irresponsibility, far more than by intellectual courage, self-dedication, rectitude, and responsibility: honorable exceptions have been few. Of course intellectual occupation is seldom conducive to exceptional bravery: the clerks and theologians of the Middle Ages, too, were wanting in the latter. The difference in the twentieth century was that now people had been taught to expect much from intellectuals who then deceived them. In Stalin's Russia, Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Italy, in France at the time of her defeat, etc., etc., the intelligentsia were both unwilling and unable to provide an example of moral resistance, let alone moral leadership, for the people. There were some exceptions, not all of them honorable. When their own existence was threatened by tyranny, certain intellectuals would proclaim their opposition to it, usually from a safe spot outside the reach of the tyrant. At home, once they discovered that resistance to a crum-

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bling tyranny was become both safe and popular, intellectuals would appear in the vanguard of the opposition, at times with commendable bravery; but we must not overlook the element of opportunism even in such temporarily inspiring performances as those of the Hungarian intelligentsia in 1956, or of the Czech and Slovak one in 1968.

For more than thirty years most intellectuals in the more-or-less free democracies in the West nurtured illusions about the Soviet Union that were not only fanciful and exaggerated but told a story that was the very opposite of what was happening in that backward country, with its Byzantine rulers. . . . Eventually most Western intellectuals would turn against the Soviet Union: but only after, not before, they discovered that their confreres living there were also getting the ax.

Preoccupied with justice (which was seldom more than a reflection of their fear of experiencing injustice), few intellectuals had a comparable preoccupation with the elusive, and yet far from unreal, character of truth. . . .

The circus continues; the intellectuals have just discovered that Castro is not quite what they thought he was with respect to poets; what he has done with the rest of Cuba has not mattered. The current intellectual rage in the United States, women's liberation, has been a clown show of shoddy scholarship and shoddy thinking, which have been no hindrance whatever to the making of fortunes and of publicity-fed careers.

Lukacs' panoramic view of the current scene suggests to him that we are on the edge of a new dark age; who, besides the technocrats who are doing their best to insure that they survive the threatened collapse, will say he is wrong? Those who look to youth for the answer are deluded. The young are themselves fearful, groping, unoriginal; they buy unorthodox opinions as they buy unorthodox clothing, and "wear" them for social reasons.

> The idealist (or, more properly, the sentimentalist) radicals among our young people are therefore quite mistaken in thinking that because of the bankruptcy of the established political and institutional ideas they, and their ilk, are bound to inherit authority and power, whereafter the building of a new Jerusalem may begin. To the contrary, power will be quickly grasped by those who want it for themselves, who would sneer or laugh at the notion that after the old order comes down, the first item of business would be the discussion of the new philosophical ideas that should govern new institutions. Something like this happened in the autumn and winter of 1917 in Russia, or during the ridiculous play at revolution by the students in Paris in May 1968, toward the end of which juvenile criminals from outlying districts began to appear in the university buildings, terrorizing and blackmailing students and their girls who already after two weeks were exhausted from debating and playing at revolution. Their compatriot Proudhon, a much deeper seer than Marx, was, after all, entirely right in saying that people react less to ideas about social contracts than to the realities of power.

As the bourgeois era recedes, Lukacs tells us, we can begin to see its merits, all the brighter for the darkness we are entering. He makes the important point that the terms "bourgeois" and "middle class" are not identical. All societies, he notes, have a "middle class," situated between upper and lower. But not every society has or has had a bourgeoisie, which is a specific historical phenomenon —and specifically European. The historical meaning, and the historical aspirations of the bourgeoisie, are those of a free urban citizenry; such terms as "bourgeois," "burgher," "borghese," meant city dweller, a member of a genuine, not an artificial, community, with historically developed civic and political rights. Marxism has confused the term "bourgeois" with "capitalist," but the two by no means coincided. "One could be a bourgeois without being a capitalist, which was true of many people in the rising professions; . . . in many instances rich people were excluded from the ranks of the bourgeoisie for all kinds of reasons. . . ." The word "bourgeois" suffered not only in its Marxist usage but also in that of the romantic intellectuals and artists of the 19th century, especially in Paris, whose elitist and pseudo-aristocratic attitudes made the word a term of contempt. We should no longer accept these distorted images of the term, but should recall its broader sense of a free urban citizenry. "Beyond this, we should extend its reputation. . . . But then, our languages are beginning to reflect this. . . . In this stock exchange within our minds 'modern' has been falling, 'bourgeois' has been rising. . . ."

The validity of this observation depends, to a large extent, on the social position of the observer. It is our new middle classes who have turned "radical" in rhetoric and possibly even in their social policies. They profess to be anti-bourgeois, nonconformist "swingers" who emulate the "free" manners of the ghetto poor, which is in turn an imitation of upper-class manners. Their rhetoric reflects their position in the new technocratic state economy that is developing; at the same time, the minority groups and many sectors of the working classes have (silently) adopted bourgeois ideals, which they no longer recognize as such: respectability, a measure of moderation and prudence, security in streets and neighborhoods, a modest humanism. This peculiar switch in values has not been widely recognized because it has not been traced to its historical roots.

Thus, the enduring significance of bourgeois civilization has been overlooked by the intellectual rebels. Part of this significance, Lukacs tells us, resides in its inwardness. Just as the bourgeois era marked the exploration of the globe, so it marked the deepening *interiority* of the European mind, a growing awareness of the mind itself. This spirit is reflected and symbolized in the bourgeois "interior" itself, as in the paintings of the Dutch and Flemish schools. This spirit is the most precious achievement of Western civilization during the past 500 years: if we have nostalgia for anything, it should be for the interiority of bourgeois society at its best.

The author concludes with a chapter called "The Consciousness of the Past," which stresses the importance for our time of historical knowledge and historical consciousness. This too has been said before by others (it is in fact the whole point and impact of Max Weber's work), but it needs to be restated again and again. It is a subject which has engaged Lukacs in a number of earlier books, each of great interest; among these are: a history of the cold war (currently available as *A New History of the Cold*

THE FOREST

A black rain touches every falling hand,
staining it immortal.
Gas flames flicker.
A steel scaffolding holds its crooked girders
over the sour waves, the barren hill.
Crowds of starving men gather in shadow
holding baskets of yellow smoke.
The earth is changed to bitter air.
The trees stand, eternal people,
after the rags of threading flesh are blown away.

Del Marie Rogers

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War, Anchor Books, 1966), his *Decline and Rise of Europe* (Doubleday, 1965), and especially his *Historical Consciousness, or the Remembered Past* (Harper & Row, 1968). This latter book especially is of the same caliber as is the *Passing of the Modern Age*. Although addressed to a narrower readership—historians—it is of equal value for the general reader, and is richer and denser in texture. The two books are in fact closely related. The earlier one is an explicit statement of historical and methodological principles, while the later book is an application of these principles to contemporary civilization. His project is clear enough; it is a humanist defense of the concreteness, historicity and specificity of human experience, against the abstract formalism which continues to devastate and sterilize the social and historical sciences.

What is finally most pleasing in Lukacs' work is its sanity, especially when contrasted with the writings of many other intellectuals who have addressed themselves to the issues of civilization in our time. It is a paradox that so many of those professing the values of the Left fall, time and again, into the traps of pseudo-religiosity in their social thinking. They fantasy kingdoms of heaven to be realized on earth; salvation will be realized through the elimination of surplus (sexual) repressions, or perhaps through technocratic state planning, or through the revolutionary overthrow of the existing social order (to be followed by technocratic state planning), or through the search for erotic community, to be realized by structures that are somehow independent of the "system." Often they project these fantasies onto the nearest (or maybe the most distant) totalitarian states (how much longer can the images of the Third World, or of Cuba, or of China perform this function?), while religiously oriented thinkers such as Lukacs and Ellul are much more receptive to the openness of human existence, much more able to contemplate with understanding the passing of ages and societies. The men of the Left (Marcuse, Norman O. Brown, Erich Fromm, Charles Reich, and how many others) strive instead to close the openness of man to history through an enforced utopia.

There are some points with which one wants to disagree in Lukacs' work. Thus, in an otherwise excellent chapter on the arts, there occurs a strange overvaluation of Debussy and Ravel, based apparently on a parallel drawn between "Impressionist musicians" and Impressionist poets and painters. Unfortunately the parallel is false; the music of Debussy and Ravel is, at least in my view, somewhat faded, and was in fact conceived in directions leading to some of the blind alleys which have stifled 20th-century music.

Similarly, I believe that Lukacs is at his weakest in his discussion of race relations. I am convinced that much of what passes for racial hostility is really class hostility in disguised form; Lukacs' misunderstanding of this point is one result of his dogmatic rejection of sociological approaches. Our white middle classes have acquired just enough "respectability" to look down on the raunchy manners of the black ghettos, especially since they have forgotten what the poverty of their grandparents was like. There is much historical and sociological evidence along these lines; by way of illustration, there are long sections of Richard Hoggart's excellent study of the British working class, *The Uses of Literacy*, which read amazingly like the black experience in America, but which are simply description of the apparatus of domination by which the (white) British working class was kept bound to the industrial machine. The resemblances of studies of poor blacks in America (such as Kenneth Clark's *Dark Ghetto*, or Liebow's *Tally's Corner*) to such earlier works as Booth's and Mayhew's pictures of the London poor, are, within limits, striking enough to make an interpretation in terms of class quite plausible. Despite the rhetoric of black intellectuals, who are as elitist as their white counterparts, the aspirations of most American blacks are expressible in class, rather than ethnic, terms.

But these are cavils about what is in essence an admirable achievement. Lukacs' style is especially enjoyable. It is lucid, unstrained, deceptive in the simple and almost offhand way in which it conveys important things, and, even more valuable, suggests by implication an orientation toward historical truth. Compared to his work, the abstract, strained Latinity of so much social science "literature" is a torture. □

Poems from a Dark Country

COLLECTED POEMS. *By James Wright. Wesleyan University Press. 215 pp. $7.95.*

ROGER HECHT

Mr. Hecht has published two books of poems: 27 Poems *and* Signposts *(both Swallow).*

Black is the color of the earth due north of Martins Ferry, Ohio, where the poet James Wright grew up. The land was once coal-mining country and, when the mines were exhausted, the ground was stripped of whatever coal remained. The high slag heaps are there to this day, and the houses are black. Across the Ohio River from Martins Ferry is Wheeling, W. Va., and there the sand from these former mines is brought to be turned into glass. Occasionally, for minutes or hours at a stretch, sunlight leaks through the black pall.

The Lord alone knows how Mr. Wright survived this dark country of his upbringing, but his poems often return to this small area of southeastern Ohio to pluck out people he imagined or encountered during the depression years. Survive and escape he did, to transform himself into a college English teacher, the author of several books of poems, and the translator or co-translator (with Robert Bly) of yet other books.

Mr. Wright's *Collected Poems* has now appeared to confirm the impression that he has in his own way continued the stories of Sherwood Anderson. I do not mean to say that he writes chiefly narrative, dramatic poetry. He writes dramatic poems, lyric and dramatic meditations, songs, descriptive lyrics and, alas, some topical poems I would like to believe he had never done. But there is an element in his work that has been there from the beginning, an element of darkness, of thwarted lives, and of water regarded as a source of renewal and a place of dying, that compellingly recalls Sherwood Anderson's stories.

The range and variety of this book are nearly overwhelming. So I'd suggest that anyone beginning to read James Wright's work pay no attention to the nearly chronological ordering of the poems—the chronology is interrupted for translations—but, instead, to dip in here and there until he acquires some sense of it. A sample of Wright at his best is "I Am a Sioux Brave, He Said in Minneapolis":

1.
He is just plain drunk.
He knows no more than I do
What true waters to mourn for
Or what kind of words to sing.

2.
The black caterpillar
Crawls out, what with one thing
And another, across
The wet road.
How lonely the dead must be.

One of the weaknesses of *Collected Poems* is that there are so many

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poems gathered here that Wright's less than best work often obscures his best. A second weakness is the self-pity in a good many of these pieces. A third weakness is talkiness, possibly but not necessarily a carry-over from Wright's profession and love, teaching. Lastly, Wright seems to attain mature human intelligence in flashes of acute perception and the level of his poetry does not match these spasms of acuity.

A few words about the secondary matter of technique. I think that technique best which calls no attention to itself. Wright has at his disposal the technique of the formal, sometimes musical, English lyric of his master, Hardy. He has at his disposal techniques borrowed from Middle English and from Latin poetry—hendecasyllabics being a favorite. But I very much doubt that he is another of the children of Whitman, though there is evidence that he has patiently and carefully read Whitman to learn what not to repeat. Wright is no more a naked poet than Thomas Eakins was a naked painter. It has taken him the better part of a lifetime to learn what Landor demanded—concision, grace, clarity. At his best, James Wright shows us, without once preaching, not to judge human life. That is an accomplishment the author and the rest of us may be grateful for. □

Half Hoss, Half Alligator

LANGUAGE IN AMERICA. *By Charlton Laird. World Publishing. 543 pp. $15.*

ROBERT L. CHAPMAN
Mr. Chapman, a professional lexicographer, is professor of English and linguistics at Drew University. At present he is completing a revision of Roget's Thesaurus.

Most of us most of the time pay no more attention to our language than we do to our breathing. This is certainly the healthiest condition of language, when it seems to shape itself to our motives or whims like the handle of a good tool to our hand. But often enough something beclouds the transparency of the medium and we become conscious of language itself. This happens when we hear something we do not understand, when we hear something that is against the rules of speaking, when we can't find the words for what we want to say, when we can't make up our mind between two ways of saying it. We realize then how intimate our speech is with our being, and especially with our sense of self, because we find ourselves capable of violent passion and suffocating frustration over mere words. In some of us this leads to a lifelong mania for language itself and its shimmering mysteries; in others, in most, to an occasional linguistic curiosity focusing on usage (right or wrong, good or bad) and on interesting or bizarre regional variations. For such linguistic laymen, Charlton Laird's new book is a valuable resource.

Professor Laird of the University of Nevada has had a long and honorable career in that practical arena of English teaching, freshman composition, which so much resembles toilet training. Almost no one really enjoys the task of acculturating the young to the sensitivity and skill in language use we think they need if they are to wear the mantle of education, yet we persist with the tired doggedness of a Hemingway hero or old Sisyphus himself. Charlton Laird's books have always been helpful and sensible.

This new one appears to be the capstone of his professional life. He worked over it, according to the preface, for some ten years, and he packs in an accumulation of lore and scholarship that is not rivaled in any similar recent book. *Language in America* deserves to be widely read, and is full of rewards for those who take the time.

In the history of such books, it is tempting to regard Charlton Laird's as an attempt to update and supersede H. L. Mencken's *The American Language*, which had both a popular and scholarly success in the 1920s and 1930s, and which Raven I. McDavid has recently kept alive with his one-volume version of the fourth edition and the two supplements. It would be a mistake, though, to match the two books, because their aims and backgrounds are quite different. Mencken was really interested only in American English, and he was sparked by linguistic nationalism. He disclaimed any knowledge of linguistics (he called it "philology"), and he was charmed chiefly by the way our national idiom has all along declared its independence from the British parent and has taken over useful and amusing words from the immigrant languages.

Laird's canvas is not the United States only, but the whole of the Western Hemisphere. He begins with the two continents bare of language (or at least of any language we know anything about) and then displays the process of their clothing with tongues as the invaders and immigrants have come and jostled one another over an indeterminate period, certainly not less than 15,000 years. Laird is within and fully aware of linguistics and its own traditions, unlike "lay brother" Mencken. The two chief virtues of his book result from his larger scope and his professional grasp of linguistic science.

These virtues are his treatment of Amerindian languages and of Spanish in America, and his careful appropriation of phonemics and dialect geography in dealing with the ramifications of the parent tongues. These were beyond Mencken's competence, and they are Laird's strong points.

The chapters on the Amerindian languages are the best popularization available of the massive and exceedingly complex material that has been such a mainstay of technical linguistics and has been the training ground of masters like Boas, Sapir and Bloomfield: the source par excellence of American linguistics. Few Americans realize that the Amerindians, although a relatively small population (about 8 million in 1492), spoke roughly 2,000 languages, whereas the whole remainder of our species spoke only about 3,000. Laird presents Carl Voegelin's map and classification of Amerindian languages, showing forty-three families of languages distributed among nine "phyla," and gives full credit to the stimulus the Amerindian languages have given to American linguistics, including the inspired speculations of Benjamin Lee Whorf and Maurice Swadesh.

For Spanish likewise, Laird gives us material that heretofore would have been found only laboriously in the technical publications of Romance linguistics. In one particularly delightful chapter he presents a simplified dialect geography of Spain, and links it as well as one can with the chief varieties of Spanish in the New World.

Laird therefore deserves good marks for decentering from the white English dialects of the United States, and my only quarrel with him in this regard is that he entirely ignores Canadian English and underestimates the particularity and importance of Afro-American. I suppose that he would not have done either if he had written in the light of Walter Avis' recent dictionary of Canadianisms and of the work of such scholars as William Labov in Black English.

For the varieties of American English Laird has taken full advantage of the work in dialect geography achieved by Hans Kurath and his associates for New England and the Atlantic Coast and by other investigators for other sections,

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work which has alas been nearly halted these last years by lack of money. His judgments are always careful, always based scrupulously on the evidence and a conservative sense of probabilities. His comparison of American with British phonemic systems should be of great interest to laymen whose sensitivity to British-American distinctions needs to be undergirded by a moderately technical understanding of the phonemic principles and terminology which make the description of such distinctions clear and consistent.

As one would expect from a linguist of his generation, the one which had to fight the battle against fossilized school grammar and the idea that dictionaries are Holy Writ, Laird pays a great deal of attention to Noah Webster and his successors in lexicography and to Bishop Lowth, Lindley Murray, and especially the amazing Goold Brown among grammarians. He treats us to an amusing account of the Great Dictionary Massacre of 1961, when the Third New International Dictionary was savaged so shrilly by a set of reviewers who should have known better.

Among the parts of the book that strike me as original and important rather than simply well done, I must mention Laird's carefully reasoned thesis that early-19th-century "tall talk" (Wh-o-o-p! I'm half hoss, half alligator, and a touch of the airthquake, and if I ain't, may I be teetotaciously exfluncted!) was more a journalistic fad than a representation of how anyone ever really talked. I am also pleased with his very suggestive observations on linguistic change and its causes, in the penultimate chapter on "The Future of American English." I suspect that more and more linguists will be attracted to the study of change and to speculation on the future of language itself, increasingly as we find that McLuhan was right about the verbal impoverishment of the first television generations. Laird's chapter would be a good point of departure for anyone wanting to prognosticate in hope or fear about the shape of English in the 21st century. Laird's own tentative theory of linguistic change, which deserves to be tested and developed, is that "there must be in man a felt need for the quality of language, as there is a felt need for language itself." The key word is "quality," and the implication must be that the efficiency of language as merely a mode of noetic communication is paralleled or perhaps overweighed by its function as a symbolic vehicle of the speaker's *peculiar* percepts and attitudes and of a whole culture's apprehension of reality. As these change, language will change in vocabulary and even in structure to embody them. Laird does not carry his speculations very far, nor must we, but this chapter seems to me the sharpest cutting edge of the whole book.

On the negative side I find that Laird sometimes lapses into unnecessary pretensions about "what man does to language and what language does to man" in an attempt to give his whole book a pseudo-thesis that he usually, I am glad to say, completely loses sight of. As to his style he is, I'm afraid, inclined to be a bit long-winded and elephantinely arch at times. And his ten-year effort has left the book rather out of date in places. Nevertheless it is a commendable achievement. □

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

Paris

Jean Anouilh's latest play, *Ne reveillez pas madame* (madame is not to be disturbed) is another of his successes. It has already run more than 250 performances, and the night I saw it the house was sold out. It has been awarded the Paris Critics' Prize as the best creation of the season.

It is ostensibly about the private lives of stage folk in relation to their profession or vice versa. "Don't wake mother," the little boy who is to become a director and the play's central character is told; being an actress, she works late at night and needs to rest mornings. She rehearses during the day. So, the boy sees only his neglected and intimidated father to whom his wife is indifferent because he is not of the theatre. Besides, mother has lovers as the boy's actress wives will have when he grows up.

The play repeats the usual Anouilh theme: the deception and despair of the decent person in a corrupt society; the fragility of human relations, especially the marital ones. Women are fickle but perhaps they have a right to be: they endure childbirth and sustain the race. On that account they are sturdier than men. Then again, the wholly earnest male is something of a bore, frequently puritanical and yet himself far from consistent in his morals. This situation is aggravated when the man and the woman belong to the notoriously unstable and disruptive world of the theatre, and perhaps more especially that of the French theatre.

This is another version of the same author's *Colombe*. But, whereas the earlier play (which I directed in 1954) possessed a certain emotional authenticity, probably because of personal circumstances, the attitude has now become a complaisant cynicism. There is a commercial taint in it. Anouilh's pessimism is how he makes his living. The Paris theatregoing public enjoys his witty denunciation of its vices. It somehow finds itself absolved by it. *C'est la vie, quoi!* I find the trick the more offensive because Anouilh manages it so skillfully.

The acting of the play is typical of the present-day Boulevard—professionalism gone rotten. It reeks of staginess. Some of the actors, genuine enough in films, carry on in the theatre with a facile and flagrant falsity of which they seem absolutely proud. One is very nearly persuaded to admire their confident effrontery.

There is something more to this than just overacting: it is shameless exhibitionism. Heavy "characterization" takes precedence over character. Every point is hammered out; stereotypes abound. One has the impression that each of the personages has put on many times more makeup than is needed for visibility or credibility. Scenes in which the players caricature the extravagances of a former stage generation (the old "Sarah Bernhardt" days) are hardly more absurd than what they do as pretended naturalism during the ordinary course of the evening's drama. (Sarah Bernhardt had a temperament that justified her giddy excesses.) Anouilh, in the person of his protagonist, says that audiences don't listen to or understand most of a play's lines: they care only about situations. So exposition is rattled at a dizzy pace, after which the actors pause to mark their "big moments," so that no one can fail to notice that that is what they are. The audience responds to these florid or hysterical declamations—the writing has a certain brilliance—with gratified rounds of applause. This is "theatre"!

I do not scorn artifice. It may convey grace, wit, elegance, polish—bespeak refinement of manner and delicacy of sentiment. One finds this in such an actor as Pierre Fresnay and among a number of English and German actors. But, though the kind of acting we see in Anouilh's play has its origins in the French inclination toward flamboyance of the romantic age and the modified bombast of the neo-classic, both have become infected by a vulgar showmanship, a phony and clamorous "Frenchiness" which the best representatives of Gallic excellence from Copeau to Vilar abhorred. These men were purifiers of the theatre of their time, the last and finest examples of which in acting was Gérard Philippe.

Acting too is rooted in the social environment. The bad acting I speak of is

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a sign of the decline of the French tradition through the grossest, most self-indulgent elements in the newly fattened French bourgeoisie with its greedy eye on the tourist trade. In the classless American world, with its vast variety of backgrounds ("high society" has vanished), the stage has developed an honest, truth-seeking actor—often blunt and insufficiently discriminating in matters of style and interpretation—impeded chiefly by lack of broad artistic training, wide repertory and continuity of practice. The English actor has gained something from the decorum imposed by the class breeding of former generations, and now with the liquidation of the Empire is being refreshed by the emergence of articulate forces from the working, regional or rural strata of the country.

I now find American and English acting of sounder and more vigorous fiber than present-day acting in France, once held to be the most dazzlingly admirable in the Western world. □

DANCE

NANCY GOLDNER

Occasionally conditions surrounding a performance overwhelm and distort what is happening on stage. Whether the desire is to commemorate, worship or transform a performance into a historical event or a dancer into a superstar, the audience has written the script before the curtain goes up. The dancer becomes a mere receptacle for the audience's passion. Obviously this phenomenon has nothing to do with the craft of dancing, and it is not surprising that ballerinas become superstars when they are past their prime.

The frenzied atmosphere created by the audience who watched Alicia Alonso and the National Ballet of Cuba in Montreal, during the troupe's Canadian tour in June, was not only in response to Alonso's age. First, there was the general feeling that this was to be Alonso's last tour, for not only is she more than 50 years old but almost totally blind. Thus she is a hero. She *is* a hero, but to be applauded for heroism is a compliment that I should hope she could do without. Second, whose hero is she? In the audience were many dance fans who had traveled from New York. They knew Alonso as an American dancer. During the 1940s and 1950s she was American Ballet Theatre's leading dancer and a great dancer too. When Castro decided to institute a nationally subsidized ballet company, Alonso and her

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husband, Fernando Alonso, returned permanently to their home in Havana to head the company and establish a school. For the Alonsos it was possibly a dream come true. Though the Americans lost a great dancer, they gained a myth. For the last ten years or so that myth has grown stronger and was finally expressed in Montreal. Alonso is a dancer, yes, but she is also a queen in exile. The embrace given to restored nobility is also something that I should hope Alonso could do without, for it is entirely possible that she felt exiled while pursuing a dance career in the United States.

There were many Cubans in the audience, some from as far as Florida. They were just as determined to proclaim the dancing much more than dancing. A conversation I had with one Cuban gives a pretty good indication of the kind of emotional baggage people brought to the theatre. He had decided to see the Cuban dancers despite the castigations of Cuban friends, who thought his wish traitorous. By chance, he and the company were staying at the same hotel. When he saw Alonso at the hotel he almost broke into tears at the sight of someone from home. Having noticed how Alonso had to be helped around the hotel because of her poor eyesight, he was most impressed with the fact that she was dancing under a great handicap. With an innocent yet intense interest in gory detail, he felt compelled to remark that her partner had to help her in ways other than partnering.

And so the urgency and fervor of the applause that greeted Alonso's entrance in *Giselle*—her most famous role—and persisted throughout the performance was everything but a response to the dancing. For the Americans it was in tribute to the past and a welcome "home." For the Cubans it was a manifestation of their national pride and homesickness, and perhaps a demonstration on the part of cultural loyalists who decided to throw politics to the wind. "Ah-lee-cia, Ah-lee-cia," they chanted. For the Cubans, Alonso is Alicia. What is Alonso to Alonso?

Again, I hoped that Alonso the dancer would prevail. Whatever the state of her dancing, the best homage (and homage it had to be) would have been to watch her honestly and without selfish motives, accepting the limitations of her age and blindness without having to assuage guilt for noticing those limitations, and forgoing the temptation to celebrate the historic character of the occasion by giving the woman a reception that blocked one's perceptions of the dancer. I like to think that Alonso would have liked that, but the kind of bows that she took at the end of *Giselle* paralleled, even encouraged, the audience's temperament. For about a half hour, finally with only 100 or so of the most faithful pushing toward the front of the orchestra, she appeared before them as the character Giselle, as a queen, as Alicia, as a goddess. She was shy, then triumphant, then eternally grateful, then obeisant. In these visitations, she was everything but a dancer. She had capitulated.

Although it is difficult to see clearly a performance given in such circumstances, it was evident that Alonso still has enough power as a dancer to have made her capitulation unnecessary. It is true that her performance in *Giselle* was tentative. Some moments bordered on the tragic, but then her blindness is a tragedy. But she still has a marvelously rounded, musical and sensual way of moving. Her technique is pure and her placement perfect, although it is not as consistently strong as it once was. Her transition movements from step to step tended to be muddy, but once she struck the central movement of a phrase, her body assumed that proud and womanly line so characteristic of her dancing. The mad scene was splendidly acted, her body changing from sanity to confusion with amazing fluidity. And there was one moment in Act II —when, in supplication to the spirits to spare her lover, she waved her arms and back like a meadow of wheat blowing in the breeze—so beautiful that it rendered the audience's hysteria ludicrous and her acquiescence to it a pathetic miscalculation of her own abilities.

The company has superb performing discipline. Every member of the ensemble is capable of great concentration, which much enhanced *Giselle* and a discotheque-style number called *Con-*

TRANSPOSITION

In the states of Arkansaw, South Dakota, Mississippi,
Idaho, and Ouisconsin—the blue bellied, the
Stone-arid, the red-clayed and pecker-wooded—
It is still illegal
For the woman to be on top
During intercourse.
Mention that at your next cocktail or pot party;
It'll bend some minds.
The two street signs glow neon at ten
In the absolutely flat night.
Even the drugstore is shut. At the corner
A cigaret tip glows but only one.
Otherwise, all Midland is coupling.

The beds heave in wavelike ripples along the town.
Springs softly twang to the echoes of other springs.
Only the room above the filling station
Is remarkable.
There the man groans, pressed to the mattress,
"My god, you're smothering me,"
While ruthless Venus wiggles.

But otherwise, over the broad expanse of
Darkened and benighted states
The male mounts.
In Arkansaw and South Dakota he has shucked
His underwear. In Mississippi and Idaho
He drops on his target from the chandelier.
And in Ouisconsin he slides on the
Stockyards like yesterday's greased pig.

Cheerful or baleful, love's tatterdemalions
Punch the Judy of the isotopes. The sand
Ripples in the vast retorts, the desert camels
Nose the tents, the earth heaves over its core of
Fire.

Let it go at that.

Carl Bode

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jugation. This gives the performances a spirited, almost charged, atmosphere that makes the ballets look more important than they are. Although this is a left-handed compliment, the ability to transcend choreographic material is unfortunately a necessary virtue, and the Cubans have it. The women are stronger than the men. In her prime Alonso could balance on one foot like no other dancer; she apparently has been able to teach many of the women how to find their center of balance consistently. Also like Alonso, they have proudly arched, high backs in their arabesques, but this glorious posture might be due to the influence of the Russian-trained Azari Plisetski (brother of Maya Plisetskaya), Alonso's partner and an eloquent dancer in his own right. The men too show careful schooling and great promise, particularly in evidence in a dance for four boys and girls in *Giselle,* which replaced the traditional duet.

The repertory is a satisfactory mixture of classics and new ballets in classical and modern style. Some, such as Alicia Alonso's reworking of a trio from *Swan Lake* and Azari Plisetski's dressed-up classroom exercise to Prokofiev's Concerto No. 1, serve as showpieces for dancers with considerable virtuoso technique and style. Alberto Alonso's *Carmen,* an adaptation of the Bolshoi production, is a vehicle for Alicia Alonso, as is to a lesser extent Alberto Méndez's *La Dame aux camélias.* The ballets exploring a more modern idiom, whether music be Bach or montages of sound, are more noteworthy for their choreographic direction than for their achievement. Alberto Méndez's *Plasmasis* for Josefina Méndez and Orlando Salgado, for example, is a cliché-ridden and static attempt at the acrobatic *pas de deux* in which the couple intertwine themselves in complicated and surprising knots, which ideally should fascinate for their erotic suggestion and physical strangeness. A ballet incomprehensibly called *Bach x II = 4 x A,* to part of the B-Minor Mass, played with the idea of using classic technique in such a nonflowing, non-lyrical style so as to make it appear modern. It was attractive and at one performance helped by the mysterious aura and sensuous arm motions of Marta García. But like most of the new works, it is a draft of a finished product.

These ballets do indicate, however, that the National Ballet of Cuba does not resemble and is not under the influence of companies behind a balletic iron curtain, where choreography has become stultified. They show the influence of the European *avant-garde,* which if it does tend toward second-rate imitations of United States dance, does at least allow for a future. And the Cuban ballet is an enterprise with a future. There seems to be little demarcation between the talents of the soloists and ensemble. There is no dead wood, which means that at any given performance one is watching the soloists of today and tomorrow. The dancers are young, and I hear that the company's school is jammed. The discovery and nurturing of choreographers is a problem, but one that the Cubans share with the world's greatest companies. □

ART

LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

In April the Guggenheim Museum canceled an exhibition that was due to open that month by Hans Haacke. The abruptness of the cancellation was linked to the fact that the show was not a collection of existing objects but was being prepared specially by Haacke. Environmental and documentary works of art frequently do not exist prior to the occasion of exhibition. This way of working has led to trouble before, as at the Museum of Modern Art a year or two ago when neither the selection nor the performance of the artists in "Spaces" worked well. However, poor as it was, the show went on. The case here is very different because the work that seemed to cause the crisis is fully representative of the artist. According to Haacke, the director of the Guggenheim, Thomas M. Messer, objected to (*1*) a documentation of slum property and landlords, and (*2*) a poll of museum visitors. But statements from the museum have mentioned only the former, so I will keep to that.

Here is Haacke's account of the disputed works: "Two of the three works are presentations of large Manhattan real estate holdings (photographs of the façades of the properties and documentary information collected from the public records of the County Clerk's office). The works contain no evaluative comment. One set of holdings are mainly slum-located properties owned by a group of people related by family and business ties. The other system is the extensive real estate interests, largely in commercial properties, held by two partners." This was one part of a three-part exhibition, the other categories dealing with physical and biological systems. Messer described the social systems as "a muckraking venture under the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation" and told Haacke so. Haacke, though concerned in his work with concrete, verifiable subject matter, proposed fictitious names for the landlords, but Messer refused on two grounds. First, that he wanted to protect the "aesthetic and educational status" of the museum and, secondly, his fear of a libel action that would impair institutional autonomy. The latter reason can be said to be disproved: both *Arts* and *Artforum* have now printed some of the documentary material and all of the names.

That leaves the other reason given, that the material was unsuitable for museum display because it contravened the museum's educational charter. According to this scenario Messer as director had to turn down the social systems for fear of where it all might lead. He demands: "What is there to

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prevent an artist-sponsored murder and subsequent insistence upon the irrelevance of ordinary justice?"—a daft extrapolation. This is quoted from a guest editorial Messer wrote for *Arts*. The same issue, June, printed a roster of 100 artists (understood to have grown longer now), from Abish to Zucker, "refusing to allow our works to be exhibited in the Guggenheim until the policies of art censorship and its advocates have changed." (Incidentally, the curator responsible for the Haacke show, Edward Fry, was fired.)

Messer has made such an open avowal of the political implication of Haacke's social systems, despite the artist's denial of advocacy, that one's suspicions are raised. There are institutional reasons that might be considered. The Guggenheim has had, ever since James Johnson Sweeney left, an inward-looking director, by which I mean that Messer has been unusually closely oriented toward the trustees, not to the art world outside where he is something of a stranger. There is a historical reason for this: Sweeney, in his reign, ignored the trustees and ran the museum as a one-man show, his own. The trustees, then as now largely family, appointed Messer with the determination not to have any more runaway directors.

Messer's exhibition schedule has as its target not so much the public (though good box office is as welcome there as anywhere else) but the trustees. The director arranges the shows for their satisfaction and a part of their contentment lies in preserving the museum from problematic art and unseemly publicity. The recent Guggenheim International Exhibition [*The Nation*, March 29] precipitated, it is believed, a crisis in Messer's career of pleasing the trustees. This exhibition not only had art made of mud on the ramps and pencil scribble on the walls; it also received a very bad press.

Thus the Haacke show, to be built like the International Exhibition, *in situ*, with myna birds and growing plants, as well as the social systems, must have threatened Messer with more trouble at the top. If Messer were less concerned with the *trustees as audience*, he might have been more sensitive to Haacke's seriousness and to the risk of antagonizing other artists. I don't know how long he estimated the resentment caused by his decision would last, but three months later it has not abated.

The problem came at a bad time for Messer, if my scenario, or something like it, is correct. This is a period when artists (as well as black, Puerto Rican, and women sub-groups) have become aware of an increase in their power as an interest group. The situation, in this form, has been developing since, say, 1959, when Jasper Johns and Frank Stella in their early twenties went more or less straight into the Museum of Modern Art. Living artists had been shown before in museums, of course, but they were usually older, and if they had trouble with the institutions it remained on a personal level. Through their increased reliance on young artists, museums have become vulnerable to groups of artists, very small numerically compared to the number of visitors, but highly motivated. They are the source or future source of what the visitors pay to see, after all, and they want more influence.

Artists are also moving aggressively in relation to galleries, which is to say collectors: witness the present attempt to enforce an Artists' Reserved Rights Sales Agreement, the purpose of which is to retain for artists the copyright and future profits from resale of their work. A token of the situation is the summer show at the Museum of Modern Art, called with ostentatious topicality, "The Artist as Adversary." It is a catchall for works in the permanent collection that happen to be on the left hand of protest. The show is at least recognition of the artists' new organizational muscle.

It is against this background that Messer has decided that the Guggenheim is a citadel to be defended. He has forgotten or discounted the existence of a fairly widespread distrust of museums among artists and revolutionary students (a part of the future museum audience). As museums embody norms of aesthetic quality they seem supportive of the *status quo*, covertly backing conservative values. Thus Messer was faced in the Haacke problem with a situation not yet reduced to bureaucratic routines. He chose merely to assert the rank of the museum rather than to demonstrate its versatility. His failure makes it harder for all of us seriously interested in working out the future role of museums in a society that is radically different from the one in which they were founded. □

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II

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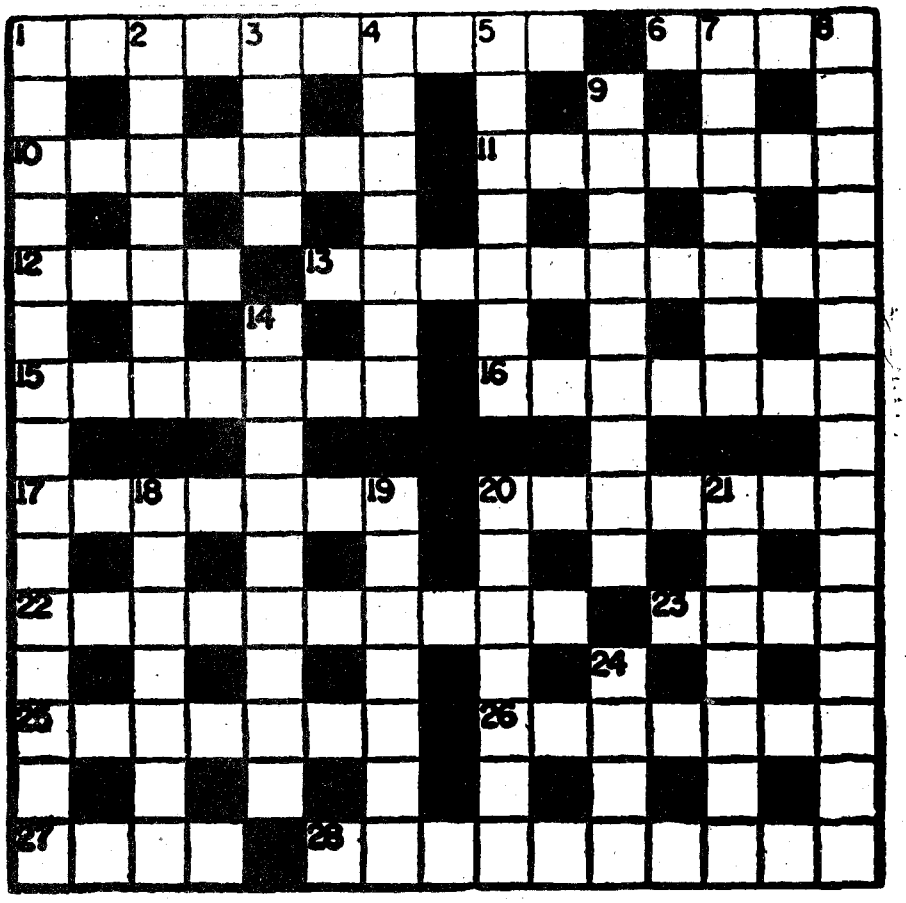
Crossword Puzzle No. 1403

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Cuts fine, if chopped up enough. (10)
6 Gain a quiet spirit? (4)
10 Old material in the information bank, but such won't stand rough handling. (7)
11 Scotsman shortly due for rough weather? (7)
12 Drinks for kids? (4)
13 Feminine letters, perhaps, and all mixed up before the end fades away. (10)
15 Gave some promotion to illegal activity. (7)
16 Drink of China, it might be. (7)
17 Sort of unable to take a direction in what might be spirals. (7)
20 An opportunity for the job of safe-cracker? (7)
22 Confronted everything before getting the urge, almost? Why, it sounds like a refining science! (10)
23 Bar Kay out of the voting group? (4)
25 In a manner implying the rest should be placid. (7)
26 Lotus displayed by Col. Umboga, if given full title. (7)
27 It might be eaten or commonly drunk by backward anti-prohibitionists. (4)
28 At the same time happening to be Lyon's Ranch? (10)

DOWN

1 It suggests one has no fear of anesthetics, especially when backed up by the crowd. (6,2,7)
2 It comes up in foreign currency, uncontrolled. (7)
3 Quotations might have this the same as "I'm willing to pay." (4)
4 This country is now a sort of lake. (7)
5 Pertaining to those of unfixed location. (7)
7 It might be your feeling, and mine too. (7)
8 Drop-outs aren't, at least for now, where a miss was supposed to be proper. (9,6)
9 A sort of 3 down, then a description might be settled. (9)
14 Evidently what one sees in Mehitabel is just an art form. (5,4)
18 At best, I find it material. (7)
19 Share-and-share alike. (7)
20 What is a little firm, but backward, about flakes of grain? It describes some food at any rate. (7)
21 Not a good sign for empty sick people. (3,4)
24 A nasty remark, or was it just said carelessly? (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1402

ACROSS: 1 Alfred the Great; 9 Modicum; 10 Subside; 11 All-out; 14 Outward; 15 Ditto; 17 Elver; 19 Treated; 21 Aurelius; 23 Divots; 25 Tripoli; 26 Average; 27 Internment camp. DOWN: 1 Admeasure; 2 Fidelio; 3 Encounter; 4 and 12 Time will tell; 5 East Indies; 6 Rebel; 7 Aliment; 8 and 24 Hell Gate; 13 Malthusian; 15 Detriment; 16 Oversleep; 18 Version; 20 Diorama; 21 Ante; 22 Loose.

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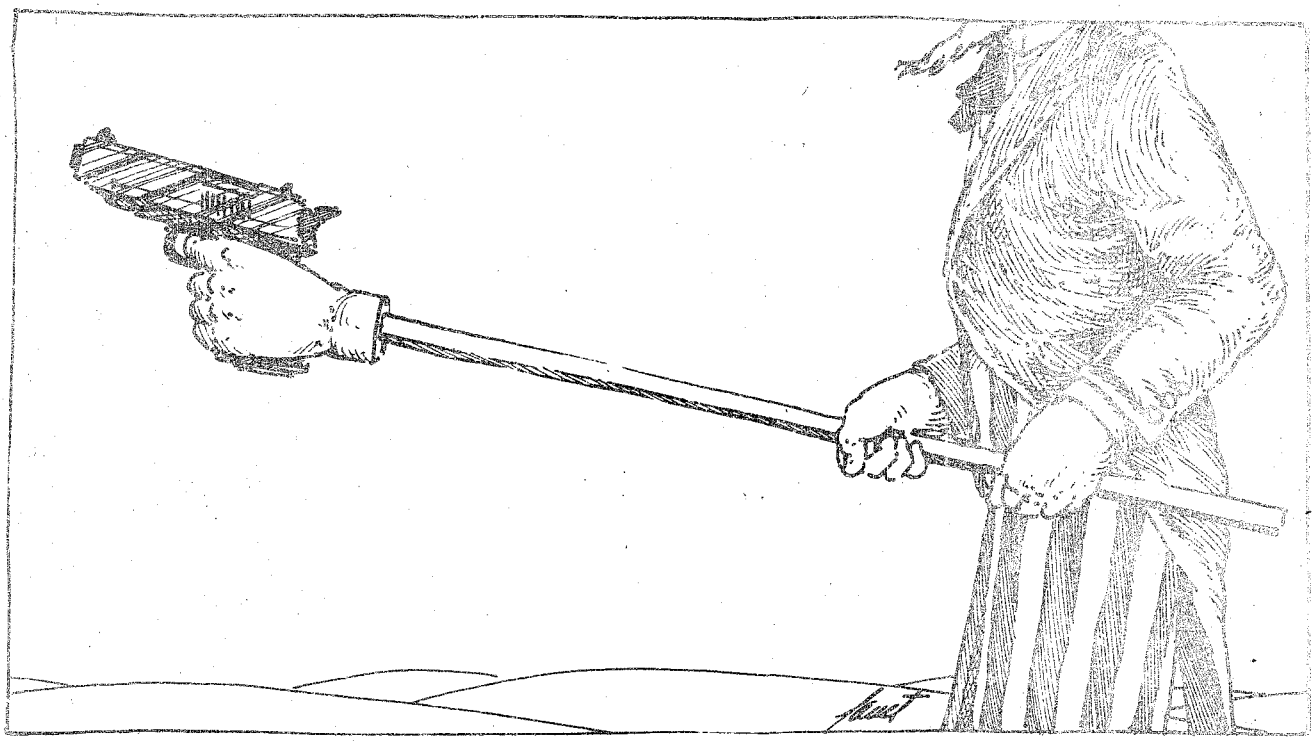

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